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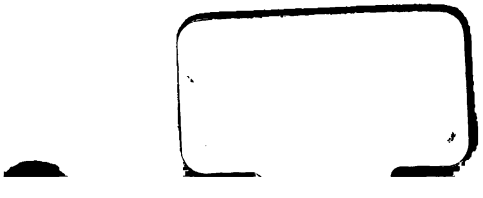

LECTURES

ON

FOREIGN CHURCHES.

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DELIVERED IN

EDINBURGH AND GLASGOW, MAY 1845,

IN CONNECTION WITH THE OBJECTS OF THE

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ON THE STATE OF

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LECTURE I.

INTRODUCTORY—"THE RELATIONS IN WHICH THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST OUGHT TO STAND TO EACH OTHER—PRINCIPLES OF UNION, AND MUTUAL DUTIES."

BY ROBERT S. CANDLISH, D.D.

MINISTER OF FREE ST GEORGE'S, EDINBURGH.

THE subject more immediately brought before us, in connection with the proposed Course of Lectures, is not so much the general question of union among Christians, as one particular portion or department of that question, bearing upon the relations which ought to subsist among the different branches of the church of Christ, in different parts of the world. The geographical divisions of the Church, according to continents and countries, form a totally distinct field of contemplation, from its polemical distractions, according to names and parties; and the inquiry into the nature of the correspondence which the Christians of various lands ought to have with one another, is not to be confounded with that which relates to the healing of breaches among Christians dwelling together in the same territory,—though, alas! not dwelling together in unity. It is true, indeed, that in the present state of Christendom, these two subjects of inquiry run very much into one another, and cannot be

kept altogether separate; since the causes of diversity which affect Christian society in one place, operate, more or less, over the whole world; and the mutual duties and terms of reciprocal fellowship among churches separated by seas and mountains, can scarcely be adjusted without facing the difficulties, and in part at least, and practically, settling not a few of the points of controversy, involved in any attempt to harmonise those, whom, without such physical barriers, minute articles of creed, and too often mere punctilios of form, rend even more widely asunder. Still, it is desirable to distinguish between the two topics; and for this, among other reasons, that while the one, namely, that which would deal with the church as geographically subdivided, may be considered with far greater calmness and clearness than the other, since it does not so violently raise the din and dust of personal and party strife,—the principles of good sense and Christian love naturally and necessarily unfolded in the discussion and right disposal of it, may, by an indirect but most happy influence, tell with good effect on what will be found to be very much mixed up with it, and what constitutes the great and urgent Christian problem of the day; the determination, that is, of the sense and manner in which, split as she is into sections and fragments, by innumerable peculiarities of thought and feeling, brought out in the exercise of that right of private judgment and free scriptural inquiry which is her just privilege and boast (let no man take her crown),—the Protestant Evangelical Church of the living God, is yet, in every land and over all the earth, to recognise herself, and be recognised by the world, as ONE.

Let us look, then, at Christianity in its first introduction to mankind, by its Divine Founder and his inspired

followers. It is to possess and occupy the world. It is to penetrate into all nations, and come into contact with every creature; and its doctrines and ordinances are to be everywhere preached and administered. How is it to be fitted for this end?

In the *first* place, it is to be altogether divested of the local and territorial character which belonged to the preceding dispensation, as well as of the cumbrous mass of ritual and ceremonial observances to which the Jewish church was bound. There is to be no holy city or venerable temple on earth, to which the tribes of the Lord must go up; there is to be no priestly order or transmitted virtue of priestly consecration; nor is any set of minute and rigid regulations, as to the worship and service of God, to be enforced by statute, or prescribed as the condition of acceptance. Under the Old Testament economy, "the people were to dwell alone;" and accessions from other nations could be made by proselytism, only on the terms of exact conformity to a strict, specified, and unalterable routine; implying a connection of locality with one favoured spot, and a concurrence in one precise and peremptory directory. The gospel threw matters much more open as to all that concerns the place, the agents, and the manner of worship; religion ceased to be local, personal, and ceremonial; the truth to be received was most exactly and carefully defined; but, evidently of set purpose, no rules were given for settling in detail the questions of, where? and how? or the localities and methods of divine service; pains were taken to have men's minds duly informed, and men's hearts made right with God; but, as to the rest, latitude was allowed for carrying out, in practice, the general principles of evangelical faith and love.

But farther, *secondly*, as to rule or government, one thing, at least, is plain, that under the new economy, no universal empire or monarchy was established; certainly not in the beginning of the Christian dispensation, was any such universal subjection to one authority contemplated, or any provision made for it. On the contrary, the temple service, and the whole priestly hierarchy connected with it, being for ever set aside, the model or platform of the Christian discipline and administration, was undeniably the usage of the synagogues; and beyond all question, that system savoured far more of the principle of republican self-regulation; each society with its own officers, exercising a large discretion in the regulation of its own services and the management of its own affairs; than of any general and uniform submission to one order or to one head. It would appear, indeed, that in cities and populous neighbourhoods, there was more of a community of the pastors and elders of different congregations, as well as of the congregations themselves, than the ancient custom of the synagogue, or, perhaps, the modern rule of independency based upon it, exemplifies and realises; and there are reasons for believing that local ties contributed to consolidate the believing inhabitants of a town, a province, and a country, into one compact body, and that this formed a part of the original apostolic plan. Still, whether on a smaller or a larger scale, the principle which developed itself in the early church, and which is, at least by implication and in embryo, contained in the New Testament, is substantially that of self-government; fitted to give the church the aspect of a number of free and separate commonwealths, rather than that of one single, vast, and gigantic empire.

It must be added, however, in the *third* place, to com-

plete this view of Christianity, as it started on its earthly career, that it evidently pointed not only to a close and frequent interchange of good offices among these spiritual commonwealths or republics, but to the exercise of much mutual deference, in the way of constantly consulting one another, referring difficult points of doctrine and duty for grave deliberation and advice, and rendering cheerful and unconstrained respect to the voice of counsel or admonition that might issue from meetings, or convocations, of venerable fathers and elders, possessing the general confidence of God's people, and giving evidence of being directed by his good Spirit. The apostolic journeys, so manifold, and often so perilous, —the messages sent by trustworthy ambassadors from church to church, conveying substantial proofs of brotherly love,—and the case or cases of conscience, sent up from the provinces, and submitted to the apostles and brethren at Jerusalem, the most influential general council to which appeal could then be made; all these precedents, without pressing them too far, or regarding them as binding in the letter, make out, at least, the general principle of a sort of federal union of kindness and consultation, among the independent Christian communities of different cities and countries throughout the world.

Now, let primitive Christianity, with a constitution thus elastic, yet cohering, be viewed as making way among the nations. Congregations spring up in the larger towns; and as these multiply, and spread their branches into the surrounding neighbourhoods, they form themselves into societies, under their pastors and elders, consulting and acting together, in consistories, or colleges, or presbyteries, or synods. Gradually and insensibly, territorial boundaries, or the arrangements of civil governments,

mould into shape and form the larger sections into which these smaller bodies combine.; union, not isolation, being the law and tendency of the gospel; and Christian communities are found to become provincial and national. Considerable diversities, it is not improbable, may be allowed to prevail, even within these united brotherhoods; and between one of them and another, still greater dissimilarity may exist. The general rule of decency and order, and the precept of mutual forbearance and tenderness towards weaker brethren, being observed in all, and rites and ceremonies of human appointment, with whatsoever, in the discipline and worship of the church, has not warrant of the word of God, being repudiated and disowned, there will still be room for shades of peculiarity, occasioned by climate, customs, or circumstances. Instead of the dead flat level of insipid and enforced uniformity, not a little variety of undulating surface and tints of diverse colours may gratify the liberty-loving eye. But no inconvenience need arise from this, nor any breach of real unity.' The discarding of all forms, ceremonies and observances, and indeed, all works of every kind, from having any place at all, or any thing whatever to do, in the sinner's justification before God, and the unanimous consent to receive that great boon, as the free gift of God, dispensed through the righteousness and blood of his own Son, and appropriated by that faith which his own Spirit works in the heart,—the loyalty and allegiance exclusively rendered to the divine word, apart from all authority and tradition of man,—the direct access to God assured to every believer in Jesus, without the intervention of any priesthood,—the liberty of adoption which the sacraments only outwardly, but the Holy Ghost inwardly seals,—and the glowing love, not

of a doubtful and contingent, but of a present and full reconciliation,—all these elements of harmony may preserve unbroken, amid many differences of detail, the peace of congregations and communities; and when to all this, we add the influence of these lesser or larger bodies on one another, through a reciprocity of cordial and kindly attention, and the weight of well-timed and well-considered decisions, given forth, on critical questions, from quarters universally deemed, at least in a moral sense, authoritative,—as from arbiters or umpires or assemblies, generally called and trusted,—we may form to ourselves the conception of the universal Christian church, minutely subdivided, as is the surface of this terraqueous globe, and in its minutest subdivisions, free and self-regulating; yet presenting, as a whole, the aspect of one great republic of letters and religion, with common counsels and a common spirit, and capable of many a combined effort, for mutual comfort, improvement and defence, as well as for reclaiming the waste places of the earth and invading the territories still unsubdued.

This, however, it may be said, is a fair theory: but alas! it is nothing more. True. But what then? Is it wonderful that the apostolic model should fail to be realised, when it was to be carried into practice by men full of prejudices and passions at the best, and in too many cases, by Christians but half-enlightened, if not, even in the earliest age, by hypocrites and formalists? Or is it the less on that account to be held up now, in these latter days, as the mould and measure of Christian effort and aspiration, if by any means the Spirit may yet be given, for having it executed on some considerable scale and exhibited to a wondering world, ere the end come?

And, that it is, in itself, no impracticable scheme, or

utopian dream, may be gathered, not only from the brief sunshine of that Pentecostal time, when the multitude of them that believed were of one mind and of one heart, and great grace was upon them all; but from the very device of the adversary himself. He, at least, is no visionary; he deals with no speculative and theoretical schemes; but he shrewdly avails himself of hints that may be acted on, and turns them to practical account. And, it might almost seem, as if the plan and machinery of this noble enterprise having fallen into his hands, Antichrist had set himself to work it out. Taking advantage of the tendency in all the portions of the church to associate and run together, and adroitly substituting a political and priestly, for a doctrinal bond and basis of union, (for it is easier to make men one, in the spirit of party or the panic of superstition, than in the harmony of free thought and warm affection,) he was able to turn the Christian ministry, throughout all nations, into a trained and disciplined police, and to give, on his own terms, to his minion, the Roman Pontiff, that throne of the world, which the Lord himself had refused. The boasted unity of Popery, with its wide-spread ramifications and organization, throughout all lands, is the mimic rival and distorted caricature, of that all-pervading sympathy, breathing submission to one another, and the submission of all to Christ, which overflowing the intersected field of Christianity, should have presented to the eyes of men, the one unbroken tide of divine and brotherly love, filling up all inequalities, and covering all landmarks, and making the whole, as it were, one broad and placid ocean, reflecting in its bosom the wondrous unity of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the one living and everlasting God.

Still farther, that we may judge of the truth and reality of the representation which we have given, let us look at the era of the Reformation. Then, light simultaneously broke in on the churches of all various lands; and without any common plan or preconcerted scheme, without dictating to one another or owning any common master, guided by the word, and the Spirit sought in prayer according to the word, congregations and communities, with their bishops, pastors and elders, reformed themselves from popery. In different countries they acted, to a great extent, independently of one another, and their different circumstances, as well as the peculiarities of national and individual character, very considerably modified their plans and proceedings; so that shades of diversity marked their several creeds and constitutions. Yet, after all, and on the whole, how marvellously near did they come to one another. The harmony of the Protestant confessions, in all essential particulars, has defied the skill and learning of Rome's ablest advocates, to effect any serious breach. How close, also, and how intimate was the intercourse and correspondence of the reformers of different lands, both personally and by letters; how frankly did the churches mutually afford to one another asylums of refuge for their persecuted sons; and how unhesitatingly were ministers, on visits or in exile, invited to officiate, as they were ever willing to do, in communities constituted, in many things, very differently from their own. Thus, John Knox served a cure in the Episcopal Church of England, preaching, whether in surplice or gown, is not recorded; and not a few of the victims of the Marian persecution, confessors of the true faith, and fugitives from the fires of Smithfield, were hailed and welcomed as honoured servants of

Christ, and officiated as pastors of congregations in Switzerland and Holland, till the accession of Elizabeth restored them, with some taint, perhaps, of presbytery and puritanism, to their own country, and their church, which they would gladly have seen brought nearer to the foreign pattern than prince or prelate would allow. England was not then quite so jealous of Geneva as she is now; nor were her sleeves of lawn so fearful of contact with the homely presbyterian cloak. We might refer to the Zurich letters, recently published by the Parker Society, as full of illustrations of the community of mind and heart that prevailed among the reformers of all the different sections of christendom; the very table of contents, is in this view, instructive,* and when we come to read the letters themselves, we find them breathing a spirit of intense affection on both sides, and especially, a spirit of deference, and anxiety to be counselled, on the side of the Anglican bishops and divines, certainly very unlike the tone and manner in which now-a-days some of them are apt to speak of those Christian churches and Christian ministers, who unhappily want the mysterious virtue resident in Episcopal government, apostolic succession, and baptismal regeneration.

* Thus, Bishop Jewel writes to Peter Martyr, Henry Bullinger, Rodolph Gualter, Josiah Simler, and others; Bishop Cox, also, Bishops Sandys, Parkhurst, Horn and Grindal, are correspondents of the same parties; and of the spirit in which all this epistolary intercourse is carried on, let the honest-hearted burst of affectionate enthusiasm to which Jewel gives vent, be taken as a specimen:—"O Zurich, Zurich," he exclaims to Peter Martyr, "how much oftener do I now think of thee, than ever I thought of England when I was at Zurich!" O for such times again, and such cordial brotherhood between the dignitaries of Episcopacy and the presbyters of those more simple communions, with which, once at least, Episcopacy did not refuse to fraternise.

Several subordinate causes contributed to form such habits of intercourse and familiar intimacy among the reformers and the reformed churches, in all various countries. Besides the fierce persecutions, which, breaking out in these countries successively, forced the protestants to flee from city to city, and from land to land, we might refer to the custom of close correspondence among learned men on the revival of letters, and perhaps, also, to the universal knowledge and use of the Latin tongue. The press did not, indeed, then, as now, teem with its innumerable progeny of ephemeral journals, which flying all abroad, as on the wings of the wind, waft the idlest gossip and the faintest rumour of the hour to the remotest climes and most secluded retreats; nor was the giant power of steam evoked to bring distant isles and continents together. Still, at that remarkable era, "men did run to and fro, and knowledge was increased;" a commonwealth of literature, with an acknowledged free-masonry of learned dialogue and somewhat stately epistolary eloquence among the initiated scholars of the day, filled all Europe; the colleges exchanged professors and students; educated men understood one another, sought to see one another face to face, visited one another, and wrote to one another. It was an age of stir and bustle, at any rate; and when, after the invention of printing and the awakening of the slumbering intellect and spirit of the times, the religious excitement came, kindled and controlled by the master minds of that age of master minds, the train was previously laid, and all was ready for the freest circulation of the flame, fed, as it was, with earth's purest and brightest fuel, and fanned by the breath of heaven.

Is the cycle again run out? Has that old era come up again? Does our own day witness a fulfilment of Daniel's

prophecy, even more striking, both physically and intellectually, than that of the Reformation period? "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Trade, commerce, gambling speculation, exhaustless and endless production of wealth, dizzy calculation of mercantile chances, incessant hurry of locomotion, a pressure, at the highest, on all men's energies—what fever of the over-wrought brain and pulse may these not occasion and account for? Then, we have the opening up of new worlds, in far Australia, and in the Chinese seas, and our fiery vessels ploughing the Indian and Atlantic Oceans, and all Europe and America chequered with those iron ways, along which men rush with the speed of wind. We have the waking up, also, of the general mind, from a cold ague fit, to alertness and life; and all things betoken on earnest time, and earnest doings. Nor are there wanting indications of a process going on fitted to make men of high thought and deep feeling recognise, over all the earth, their brotherhood again. Events and circumstances are bringing such men more and more together. They who have toiled, and testified, and suffered for Christ in different lands, are seeing one another in the flesh, and learning to know one another. Visits are interchanged; and foreign accents are not so strange as they were in social circles, and even in ecclesiastical assemblies, and the customary house of prayer.

Is the analogy we have indicated altogether fanciful? Nay, does not that Reformation era, with its disruptions and reconstructions—its rending asunder of many ties—its stormy outbreak of truth in the very heart of Popery—its healing again of the wound inflicted on the beast,—its confronting of the combatants to one another, with that strange breaking of their ranks, ere the combat was well

begun—almost seem as the shadow of what is now to be exhibited—the rehearsal of what is now to be enacted, on this time-trodden stage, ere the curtain drop which is to close all? If so—if in any measure this may be regarded as a true interpretation of past and present appearances—may we not seek, if it please God, under happier auspices, to realise the state of things, as regards the fellowship of the churches, which partially existed among our reforming fathers; and the rather, as they have left some beacons for our warning.

Into the causes which arrested and disturbed the free circulation of the pure and vital blood through all the veins of the body ecclesiastical, animated surely, for a time at least, by one soul, through the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ, it would be impossible to enter at large; they will be found to be to a great extent identical with the causes of the check given to the advancing progress of the Reformation—a fact, or phenomenon in history, at least as remarkable as its rise. The marvellous growth of that living form of Christianity soon came to a stand; the reforming church ceased to expand herself; the quickening Spirit seemed to be straitened or withdrawn; and the firm strength and fresh beauty of her nervous frame, gave place to the pallor of exhaustion in the countenance, and in the limbs, the palsy of premature decrepitude and decay. Angry passions tearing her own bosom, and the wretched wars, and still more wretched politics, of the princes of this world, who would be by turns her tyrants or her patrons, contributed to this sad result; and for long years, the Protestant church in Christendom, as a whole, may be said to have dragged on a protracted existence, with fitful impulses of partial and occasional revivals; but, alas! without that uniform and general "growing

up into Him who is the head, in all things," whereby "the body maketh increase of itself, unto the edifying of itself in love." The religious wars, also, on the Continent, the revolutionary struggles in England, the persecutions of the Vaudois in Piedmont, and the Covenanters in Scotland, together with the internal factions which distracted and weakened the various national churches, and the tendency of the reaction from that eager tension of spirit, which had been keeping men's minds on the stretch, to degenerate into the languor of barren and antinomian orthodoxy, or to seek relief in novelties and errors—all these influences must be taken into our calculation, if we would trace the origin and stealthy advances of that sleep of death, which fell, as a withering blight, on the whole Protestant church; and in which even Popery partly shared. Then came the days of isolation, when churches severed by a ridge of hills, or an arm of the sea, knew little of one another, and cared to know still less. Nor was this surprising. For, could it be expected that they would be very anxious to inquire of one another, how it fared with Christ's cause and men's souls, when they never seriously made such inquiries within themselves? And when, at last, a better day began to dawn, as the eighteenth century drew towards its close, and the present was darkly ushered in, amid the storm of war, yet with gleams of better hope,—the faithful men in each community found enough to do at home; and some time, besides, must naturally elapse, before the long habit of selfish indifference could be broken, and the beating of the warm Catholic heart of Christianity be felt once more.

But, now, the hour is fully come, and the longing is generally felt, for the current of evangelical sympathy

to circulate again, and the grace and strength of evangelical union,—not artificial, forced, and fettered,—but free, elastic, and unconfined,—to be manifested at last for the conviction of an unbelieving world. How all-important, in such a crisis, that all the several sections of the Protestant commonwealth, instead of churlishly questioning, or with faint hesitation, barely admitting, one another's Christianity, should have arms and hearts open to embrace as brethren! How sad, if any church, however apostolic, shall isolate herself, in these days, from the great Protestant brotherhood, and under whatever pretence of a *via media*, between Romanism and Dissent, shall insult the spiritual descendants of Luther and Calvin, by coolly classing them in the same category, under some nicely-turned antithesis, with the followers of the Man of Sin.* What pity if the Church of Cranmer and Jewel, enamoured of a soul-destroying error, making baptism the new birth, and besotted with

* For instance, an article in the "English Review," on the "English Church on the Continent," making all hope of good depend, as usual, on Anglican Episcopacy, thus skilfully balances its censures and concessions:—"Both the Romanist and the Protestant communions are in these countries in a state of ferment, the former unable to resist the progress of more enlightened views of Christianity, even within its own pale; the latter equally unable to avert the licentious rationalism that has been bred in its bosom." Of course, Anglican example is to put all right, both parties being, as it would seem, about equally wrong. Or, if some charity is to be extended to them, it is with the same impartiality, giving no preference to either. "The Christian communions of the Continent, however much they may be defiled by Romish errors, or however imperfectly constituted, in the absence of an apostolically derived ministry,"—their faults about equal, and their chances equal too,—"are not to be held by us as beyond the pale of the Christian world." Most gracious admission! And this is not a Tractarian journal, but one rather of a moderate tone.

the fond notion of a transmitted priesthood, going far to make void the sole priesthood of Christ,—shall seem to frown on the entire mass and body of reformed christendom, which, from the beginning, with the single exception of herself and her American daughter, has chosen, as scriptural, a simpler ritual and less ambiguous faith, and the privilege of being taught and governed by presbyters alone. What avails the shallow pretence of the rationalism of these churches, already fast disappearing before the reviving enthusiasm of a reviving age? Has she forgot the cold fit of latitudinarianism and infidelity, which the passing knell of death in her high places may even now remind her, is scarcely yet over? And is she really to stand aloof, as, amid the multitude of those who worship Jesus, the sole authentic depository of the grace of Heaven, prepared to swallow up all her once-owned and much-loved sister churches, but to give the hand of fellowship to none? If so, shall not the voice go forth, for this and other signs of sympathy with Antichrist, Come out of her my people; or at least raise a more energetic protest within,—aye, though England's St Bartholomew be enacted once more, and a stern mother cast forth her thousands from her bosom, to find a home in every Christian heart, and be free to recognise a brother in the kindling eye of every Christian face?

All honour, however, we must add, be to the men, such as Hartley, Bickersteth, Gillies, and the many other friends of the Continent, among the clergy and people of the English Church, who were the first to awaken among Christians at home, an interest in religion abroad, and who have proved themselves the uniform and liberal supporters of all the missionary plans of our brethren in foreign lands. Would that they were

able to stem the tide of Anglican intolerance, which threatens to sweep all reason and charity away! Would that they, and many besides, held themselves more free and ready, for combined cordial and decided action, with the calumniated Protestants over all the world, against the fast mustering ranks of Oxford and of Rome!

But, passing from this painful theme, let us ask,—What practical measures may be taken for manifesting and maturing the union, which is so desirable, and turning it to good account? And, here, the first expedient which naturally suggests itself, is that of conference and consultation among the churches. On this point, the general principles laid down at the outset may partly guide us; and we may profit also, by the experience of the reformers. Two things, especially, seem clear, *first*, that we are not ripe for the calling of anything like a general legislative or authoritative council; and *secondly*, that, for any scheme of co-operation, to insist on minute agreement on all the articles of any creed, would be an insuperable barrier, at the very outset, to all hearty correspondence or communion.

In regard to the *first* point, we may observe, that even in particular countries, few would anticipate good, at present, from national conventions of the Christians at large, to settle the affairs of the nation's Christianity; nor, however precious the result of their deliberations, would a repetition of either the Synod of Dort or the Westminster Assembly precisely meet the present exigency. And on a larger scale, any such attempt would be disastrous. But nothing could be more practicable, nothing more safe or becoming, than the meeting together, from time to time, of brethren, representing the various Protestant churches, at convenient seasons and places, for prayer

and conference on all that relates to their common Christianity. Let such convocations, stated or occasional, be arranged to be held, now in one great city and now in another, and let the facilities of travel be regarded as taking away all excuse from any society neglecting to send its members; and when these convocations are constituted, let them have no power or authority over particular churches, nor any right to interfere, beyond giving advice when asked; but let the time be spent in Christian fellowship, and devout exercises of soul before God; let missionary intelligence, and information regarding the Lord's work, be interchanged; let the progress of error be watched and marked; and let plans be canvassed, and suggestions made, for promoting the increased efficiency of the means of grace, and obtaining an increased effusion of the Spirit of God. Controversies need not be agitated, since there would be no competent tribunal to settle them; questions of discipline and government need not come up, since there would be no court of final appeal to dispose of them: all may be occupied in brotherly conversation on the spiritual realities of the divine word, and the spiritual interests of the divine kingdom.

The *second* matter referred to is more difficult; the adjustment of such a test or criterion of genuine Christianity, as may exclude the avowed holders of error, and yet be comprehensive enough to embrace all who love the truth. For this end, it is allowed on all hands, that whatever may be the general harmony of the Protestant confessions, no one of them could in fairness be adopted, as it stands, for all. Two methods are suggested for getting over this difficulty. The first would seek, by a selection out of existing confessions or the compilation

of some new form of agreement, to frame a few short and simple articles in which all may concur, embodying the essentials of the gospel, and nothing more. Now, we acknowledge that we look with considerable dread to this plan being carried out, both because it is so difficult as to involve endless delays and deliberations,—meeting the views of this body, and obviating the scruples of that, and bandying to and fro indefinite proposals; and still more, because it seems to be fraught with danger to the soundness and good faith of the churches, in their adherence to their present formularies. It is a hazardous thing to set about drawing the line between essentials and non-essentials in religion, and selecting out of a creed, which is compact and consistent as a whole, what portions are to be deemed indispensable, and as such, detached from the rest, on which a slur may be thus imagined to be cast. We fully admit, indeed, the propriety of Christians substantially drawing this distinction, for the recognition of one another's Christianity, and the regulation of their mutual intercourse. But the risk is when they begin also to do this, in forming their own opinions, and determining their own conduct; for a door is thus opened to much subtle casuistry and refinement, and a sophistical tampering with conscience, as to the harmlessness of ignorance and error, upon minor points. Now, in this view, it is not safe for any man to count any point a minor one, on which Scripture may be found to give any deliverance at all, if he use such an idea as an apology for either not inquiring, or not making up his mind, in regard to it. For, not to speak of the relaxed conscientiousness and impaired moral tone that may be thus engendered, we really know too little of the mutual relations and influences of the truths of God, as they

stand in his word, all harmonizing and meeting together, or of their mutual bearings, as they balance one another in the believing mind, to be able to assure ourselves, that an error, even in non-fundamentals, may not, to us at least, be pernicious and fatal; and it were to be regretted, if the adoption of a vaguer and more general profession, in the adjustment of the fellowship of the churches, should seem at all to warrant a loose and latitudinarian interpretation, even of the details, of their particular creeds. But, besides, we have another fear. All experience shews, that the omission, or disparagement, or doubtful interpretation, of a single clause in a well-weighed doctrinal statement, may be held to cover far greater laxity than was ever contemplated. It is by no means the same thing for a Christian man, or a Christian church, to abandon a doctrine previously held, as it is never to have known it; the abandonment of it necessarily involving more than the mere absence of it would have done. Hence, as has been often remarked, degenerate Calvinism, is not so spiritual and evangelical as reviving Arminian Methodism. We are apprehensive, therefore, that such a general form as may be devised, would come to be practically construed even more liberally than might be intended, and would fail to exclude parties, whose presence might damp all zeal and mar all concord.*

* We have seen an attempt of this kind made by an American divine, evidently in the most excellent spirit, which, however, as we humbly think, only serves to shew the difficulty of the experiment, without holding out much apparent prospect of success. It is contained in a little work, with the title of Fraternal Appeal, by Dr Schmucker, Theological Professor in the Lutheran Church, published in 1839. The specimen of a united Protestant confession, in twelve articles, is given, each article being framed in words

For such reasons as these, we prefer a mode of adjustment, which, leaving the confessions of all the several churches untouched, would provide rather a negative than a positive criterion; uniting all who protest against certain errors, and whose very protest shews their willingness to combine in advocating the opposite truths. And if it be objected that this mere denial is too cold a cement of union, and that something more positive is needed, let it be considered, in the *first* place, that the end proposed being not authoritative decision, but friendly consultation, it is enough if we have the warrant of opposition to common foes for securing that we are really friends; and, *secondly*, that the range of antagonist errors is such, as to afford sufficient security that the condemnation of them, as in a circle, all around, must proceed upon an admission of the enclosed and central truth.

It is with extreme diffidence that we presume to express this opinion, which may seem to be at variance with that of a very high authority on this subject. We refer to the distinguished historian of the Reformation, who, in a recent address, thus eloquently pleads the cause of Christian brotherhood, and, not only so, but suggests practical measures for promoting it:—

"The principle of union—of catholicity, was one of the essential features of Scripture and of the Reformed Church. Whatever others say, to this let us adhere.

"Further, this unity of the Church in heaven must one

selected out of the Reformed formularies, half a sentence often from one, and the other half from another, ingeniously put together, and on the whole sound; yet bald and meagre, if not ambiguous, presenting a sort of tessellated work, or artificial joining together of "*disjecta membra*," which would scarcely convey a fair impression of the real creed of any of the combined bodies.

day be manifested on earth. 'There shall be one fold and one shepherd.' Precious promise! Yes, all these barriers shall fall, all these party colours shall be effaced, and Christ alone be King of his people. But how shall that glorious time arrive? Some would hasten it by cabinet orders duly sealed and registered in the bureaux of the civil administration. Others would bring it on by introducing into the Reformed Church the hierarchical abuses and magical operations which she has rejected. Others, in fine, aim at it by latitudinarianism. Let us reject all these human expedients, and await this union from God and not from man.

"Nevertheless we have also something to do. On the one hand, in waiting for the Lord, we must be truly what we are. Were a man to be created by the union of a soul and a body, would not the first thing necessary be, that the soul were truly a soul and the body truly a body? Could we think it a good preparation for the union, to deform at once both the soul and the body? But on the other hand, let us above all cleave to the grand doctrines which we hold in common.

"You know the proposal which was made with that view at Saint Gall, in the General Assembly of Swiss Pastors.* It was made only some weeks ago, and yet

* "The proceedings at St Gall were as follows:—

"The general conference of the pastors of the Reformed Church of Switzerland took place at St Gall, on the 13th and 14th of August. One hundred and sixty professors and pastors assembled in the grand council-chamber of the ancient palace of Prince-Abbe. The first day was devoted to the important question of the Confessions of Faith, designated by the last conference; and Mr Scherer, a pastor of the canton of St Gall, began by reading a paper which he had been charged to draw up. M. Merle D'Aubigné, the only representative of French Switzerland present at the conference,

letters on the subject have already reached me from various quarters. In particular, I have received from

developed and explained his motive in bringing forward the following resolutions (in Genevan), which he then laid on the table :—

"The Swiss Pastoral Society, assembled at St Gall, one of the principal seats of apostolic or missionary labours in the west, acknowledges and resolves,—

"'*First*, That it is highly desirable for all evangelical Christians, Reformed and Lutheran, Presbyterians and Episcopalians, and generally, all who believe in the fundamental truths of the gospel, to unite for the purpose of making an open confession of their common faith, in opposition to the unity, purely material, of the Romish Church, and thus proclaim their own true and spiritual unity.

"'*Secondly*, It resolves to put itself in communication with some of the pastoral conferences recently formed in Germany, particularly with that of Berlin, which has very lately occupied itself on the same question, and this may eventually lead to a similar union with the pastoral conferences of other countries, namely, France, Great Britain, Holland, and America, and to the re-establishment of an œcumenical Confession of the Christian faith.

"'*Thirdly*, It appoints a commission, authorised to fix the basis of an Evangelical Confession of the nineteenth century, and which shall contain the truths embodied in all existing Protestant Confessions, and arranged in a form adapted to the wants of the present age. This commission should likewise be authorised to take the necessary steps to obtain the end pointed out in the preceding articles.'

"The author of this proposal, whilst making it, reminded his hearers, that at the period of the Reformation, Calvin and his friends in Geneva opposed themselves energetically to the tendency the Swiss evinced of looking only to their local churches, and strove to direct their attention to the church at large. He further added, that one of the wants of the present times was, the unity of a true Catholicity, and that, however remote we were from this desirable end, it was now quite time to take the first steps towards it.

"These resolutions having been seconded by Professor Kirchoffer of Schaffhouse, and approved of by Mr Schiess senior, one of the pastors of the canton of St Gall, and likewise by the licentiate in theology, Mr Scheuker, was carried by a considerable majority, and sent, recommended, to the Committee of Conference."

Scotland this interesting communication: —'Our Provincial Synod having met on the very day when this good news arrived, unanimously resolved to overture the General Assembly to countenance the proposal of Saint Gall.' Surely we are moving towards a grand union. Let us then cast far from us our disputes, our injuries, our nicknames, our false accusations, and our grievous personalities. Let us not give way to a passionate, blind, sour, and bitter spirit, which would kindle again among us the polemics of the sixteenth century. Let us rather with one heart exclaim,—'Come quickly, Lord Jesus.'" —*The Last Days, by J. H. Merle D'Aubigné, D.D.*

Not in antagonism to this proposal, but in furtherance of it, we venture to call attention to the method indicated in our own church, in a plan submitted to the Commission of Assembly, towards the end of the year 1842. On that occasion, a report was given in relative to the contemplated commemoration of the Westminster Assembly; embracing, however, a scheme for a more extended union among the friends of evangelical truth throughout the world. In introducing the report, the Convener, among other things, remarked:—"A desire after more unity was rapidly extending in the Christian church. Communications on the subject, of a very delightful kind, had recently appeared from ministers and members of several evangelical denominations, including a very admirable one from that eminent and godly Independent minister, Mr James of Birmingham. The unity desired was founded neither on popish uniformity, nor on latitudinarian compromise, but on an agreement on essential points. It had struck the committee that, on this occasion, something might be done to follow out these breathings after unity at home and abroad; and in pur-

suance of this view, the committee begged to lay on the table the following interim report." The report itself went very generally into the subject, and was far from doing justice to it; but as to the matter now on hand, we still think that some of its hints might be useful. In particular, we crave attention to the basis of union, and the kind of fellowship among the churches and evangelical societies in Christendom, which it indicated. We give below some extracts from it;* simply observing, for the present, that the outline might easily be filled up and rendered more precise and de-

* "Besides the commemoration of this event (the Westminster Assembly) by the several churches which hold the Westminster standards, separately and by communion with one another, the committee are of opinion that advantage should be taken of this opportunity for attempting a joint or united meeting of Christians of different denominations, on a still larger scale, and in a wider and more catholic spirit. That in Presbyterian communities, as in Scotland, Ireland, and America, and among the Presbyterians in England, there should be solemn meetings, at which communications by deputations, or otherwise, may mutually be interchanged, is highly desirable and important. But, in addition, there is every reason to believe, especially from recent movements, that a proposal for a more general convocation of evangelical churches would be hailed with great satisfaction, and would be productive of much good; while it might be so arranged and conducted, on the principle of a united testimony against prevailing heresies and corruptions, of various kinds, as to have an appropriate harmony with the Westminster Assembly itself, which, while it aimed at unity and uniformity, had for one of its leading objects the fencing of the true Protestant Church, on every side, against anti-Christian errors.

"Following out this idea, it is suggested that a plan for the constitution of such a meeting might be framed, which would be sufficiently precise to exclude heresy and disorder, and yet sufficiently wide and catholic to admit of all who hold the Head, which is Christ, joining in the consultations, as well as in any measures which might be adopted for the advancement of the principles of the Reformation and the extension of the kingdom of Christ. Three points require, in this view, to be considered:—the parties

finite; the errors condemned might be more accurately specified; and the whole might be so adjusted, as to

who are to meet—the terms of the meeting—and the objects to be sought.

"I. The parties who are to convene.

"1. These should, as far as possible, be individuals duly named and commissioned by the respective bodies in whose name they are to sit.

"2. The bodies so naming commissioners might be either the supreme assemblies of those churches which have such assemblies; or, in the case of churches not having supreme assemblies, any association, society, congregational union, or general conference, which is understood virtually to be the bond of union and the centre of action among any number of evangelical Christians.

"3. By correspondence among the churches, and by the appointment of committees, this preliminary point, as to the bodies which are to send commissioners, and as to the number to be sent by each, might be arranged and settled.

"II. The terms of meeting.

"1. Great difficulty might be felt in framing anything like a general creed or confession of faith, in which all the commissioners should concur. There are obvious objections to the statement of essential truth in terms more wide and comprehensive than the several churches have adopted in their respective standards; and there is manifest danger of schism or of latitudinarianism in such an attempt.

"2. But in entire accordance with the spirit of Protestantism, as well as with the exigency of the times, it is conceived that such a body of commissioners from various evangelical denominations, might harmoniously and effectively meet and concur in a statement of errors renounced and opposed, rather than of truths held. And the errors which would require to be specified are of such a nature, that the mere denial of them would be a sufficient guarantee for substantial soundness of faith.

"3. These errors are chiefly of three kinds; and the terms might be stated in the form of a protest against Socinianism or Rationalism, Popery, and what is called Tractarianism. The protest would thus embody a denial and renunciation,

"(1.) Of socinian and rationalist principles, as these affect—1. The inspiration and interpretation of Holy Scripture; 2. The doctrine of the Trinity; 3. The person of Christ; 4. The doctrine

make it plain, that while all Evangelical Christians,—Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Independent, Baptist and Pædo-Baptist, Calvinist, Lutheran, Methodist,—might concur in the terms and test of unity, and meet for conference of the frankest kind, none else could honestly intrude themselves, to disturb the general harmony.

On the whole, we cannot but think, that, at least for a commencement, this mode of procedure is safer and

of the atonement; 5. The personality and work of the Holy Ghost.

"(2.) Of popish principles, as these affect—1. The supreme and exclusive authority of Scripture; 2. The doctrines of the mass, transubstantiation, purgatory, &c.; 3. The power of the priesthood, auricular confession, supremacy over civil rulers, &c.

"(3.) Of tractarian or semi-popish principles, as these affect—1. The doctrine of justification by works; 2. The doctrine of regeneration in baptism; 3. The doctrine of the sacraments, *ex opere operato*; 4. The apostolical succession and the catholicity of the Church, &c.

"III. The objects to be sought by such a meeting.

"1. The exchange of mutual and brotherly affection among various bodies of Protestants might be expected to strengthen and encourage the several churches in the good work of the Lord.

"2. While the meeting would, of course, be strictly precluded from all authoritative interference in the affairs of any of the bodies represented in it, and while controversial discussion on matters on which they differ must necessarily be avoided, a free interchange of advice and consultation might be encouraged: and by prayer and the searching of the Word of God together, light might be expected to be cast on the principles of our common faith, and the duty and prospects of the church at large in the present critical state of the world.

"3. The various missionary operations of the several bodies or churches would furnish an interesting theme.

"4. The spectacle might be exhibited of Protestant unity, as distinguished from Popish uniformity and latitudinarian compromise.

"5. Out of such a meeting, besides its being a pleasing opportunity of brotherly fellowship in the Lord, more mature plans for future fellowship and co-operation might arise."

more speedily practicable, as well as less apt to raise conscientious scruples and difficulties, than that which implies the framing, at the outset, of a general Protestant creed. Let this ulterior object by all means be kept in view, and let the consultations of the brethren have a reference to its ultimate accomplishment. But, meanwhile, as it is far easier, and will take less time, to specify errors which we agree in condemning, than to compile any compendious, and yet correct, summary of our common faith,—what should hinder arrangements being instantly made for holding a succession of yearly or half-yearly meetings, in London, Paris, Geneva, Berlin, and other places, to be attended by brethren of different lands and denominations, concurring in a protest against Popish and Socinian errors, and to be conducted on such general principles, and with such objects in view, as might tend to bring about, under God, at no distant date, something like that harmony of faith, and unity of action, of which some hope seemed to be held out, at the first promulgation of the Gospel, and again, at the blessed awakening of the Reformation era?

But we must draw this lecture to a close, and in doing so, we would urge another practical duty, connected with the keeping up of a good understanding among the churches; and that duty consists in a right observation of the signs of the times and the nature of the present crisis, and a disposition to extend sympathy and aid, wherever the enemy seems to be most pressing, and the line of defence most feeble and most apt to break. We might take a review, here, of the Continent of Europe, with those adjoining regions in Africa and Asia, which along with it, make up the platform of the apocalyptic earth, destined, it would seem, to be the scene of the

last outbreak of the antichristian power, and of its signal and final fall. The revival of Popery, and in particular, of Popery's surest and subtlest agency, the secret, stanch and deadly order of the Jesuits, is the most wonderful event,—the greatest fact—of our day. Why, it seems but as yesterday, when Popish as well as Protestant governments united to put down that pernicious system; and, suppressed by a stern Papal bull, the remnant of the scattered followers of Loyola scarcely found a precarious refuge in the retreats of Poland, and under the wing of the Russian Czar. The struggles in which the Gallican church proved and abused her liberties, under the reign of Louis XV, seemed to manifest the effete and worn out impotency of the once formidable power of Rome; and when, but a few years after, the infidel hurricane swept away the whole clergy of France, and Napoleon stript the Pope of his tiara, and held him, a poor prisoner, at his mercy,—the tide of feeling turned, and sympathy was enlisted on the side of what was now the weaker and persecuted party; till, pity being akin to love, the devout refugees driven from their altars, and the poor old man insulted at Avignon, became the objects of a complacency and admiration, which easily extended itself to the whole system that was identified with such illustrious sufferers. But the era of Rome's deepest humiliation was the beginning of her triumph; and as if Satan here too mimicked the ordinance of God, he made her weakness to be her strength. A brief space saw Jesuitism revived; unprecedented treasures cast into the coffers of the Vatican; fresh zeal imparted to the propaganda; old lethargic priests replaced by the sons of young Rome; abuses checked; discipline restored; and everywhere signs and symptoms of new life and heat. All this went

on quietly; Protestants being unobservant and off their guard; insomuch that Protestant statesmen were beginning to believe that the once gigantic and implacable tyranny of Rome had become mild as a little child,—its roar as gentle as any sucking dove's, and its fair form one that might be fondled and caressed as a tame and petted lamb,—and even Christian divines were apt to give charitable credit to the profession of a meek and tolerant spirit, which adversity seemed to have taught, and, against the more sagacious views of the older interpreters, were inclined to read the prophetic record as announcing not a Popish, but an infidel, Antichrist, to be chiefly dreaded at the last. All the while, securely, silently, stealthily, that Church, with her Jesuit staff, was winding and working her serpent way, till, almost within these few last days, she ominously starts forth to view, with a footing already won in the very heart of infidel France,—a wily hand insinuated into the foreign relations and domestic policy of Britain,—a plot laid for convulsing Switzerland to its centre,—and from Eastern China to remote Western America, throughout the South Sea Isles, and along the Mediterranean coasts, a secret, but firm, grasp laid on all educational, political, and social influences, by which general opinion is to be moulded, and the mass of men to be ruled. And, now, backed as she is with enormous resources, courted by too many of the Potentates of Christendom, and skilfully adapting herself to the progress, as well as to the exigencies, of this overwrought age, she seems about to wield an empire over the human mind, as effectual as she ever did in the darkest gloom of ignorance;—an empire, too, which, as it is now allied to enlightenment and civilization of the highest pitch, may be regarded as, on that very account. so much the

more proud, and it might seem also, so much the more secure.

But "when the enemy cometh in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord lifteth up a standard against him." Never, perhaps, was this text more signally fulfilled than now; whether we regard the revival on the side of truth as chiefly preceding that on the side of error, or following in its wake, or partly both; at all events, the simultaneous infusion of spiritual life, from above and from beneath, into the antagonist ranks, in this great contest, must be obvious to all competent observers. It is like the resuming of hostilities after a doubtful and precarious truce. The armies have been encamped in their trenches, upon a kind of tacit understanding that the war was suspended: their armour has been allowed to rust, and sloth has enfeebled the combatants: mutual civilities, also, have been interchanged, and it has become a point of honour to be chivalrously complaisant to a brave foe: private friendships have been formed; and not only the fierceness of personal animosity, but even the sense of weighty public causes of difference, has given way to the influence of reciprocal familiarity and acquaintanceship. But, suddenly, the trumpet sounds; the armistice is at an end; the crisis is come. Both armies awake as from a slumber; new animation pervades their ranks; the tents of idleness and dissipation are broken up; and the lines of battle are promptly formed. Meanwhile, the effect of the respite is felt on both sides; some, in either host, have imbibed leanings towards the other, and are really in heart devoted to the interests they are called formally to oppose; and not a few have begun to think that the quarrel might have been avoided from the beginning, and are asking if, at least, it may not be compro-

mised now? But, alas! it soon proves to be an irreconcilable feud; and, with some wrong assortment of individuals, which must be left over for extrication till the day of reckoning, the troops are found eager and alert to take up their respective stations; and that, not as on parade or in review, but in earnest and warlike array.

Thus as Popery has been reviving in spirit, and mustering her forces, so also Protestantism may now be seen, especially on the Continent of Europe, awaking as a giant refreshed, shaking herself from the dust, freeing herself from the "canker of a calm world and a long peace," and nerving, as well as purging, herself for the impending strife. French frivolity, German mysticism, English materialism, and Scottish idealism,—all these and other forms of infidelity are passing away, as unsuited to the gathering storm; in which nothing of holiday and courtier make, or of idle academic subtlety, will live; nothing, in short, but what is strong and stern; scriptural or antiscriptural; whether it be desperate atheism, or bigoted and intolerant Popery, or warm and spiritual Christianity. Hence, the Protestant church, weary of rationalism, under every form, is becoming instinct with energy. Even on the principles of common policy, something may be expected to come out of this awakening: and if we recognise in it, as every devout student of the Bible must, the immediate interposition of the Spirit of God, opposing Satan, the spirit of Antichrist,—what enthusiasm of courage may not this thought inspire into our ranks, and what bright hopes of victory, after a deadly and desperate struggle, may it not entwine, around the banner which our God has given us?

On many accounts, therefore; in the view,—1. of the original plan and purpose of Christianity; 2. of the mar-

ring of that plan through the antichristian perversion of it; 3. of the glimpse given at the Reformation of a better state of things; 4. of the present singularly favourable aspect of affairs, when compared, in this respect, with the past; as well as, 5. of their critical character, when scanned in reference to the future;*—we urge the

* The substance of the following note has been communicated by an intelligent student, who has just returned from the Continent, and whose fresh impressions, the result of observation and conversation in different countries and among different classes of men, may be regarded as giving a vivid picture of what is going on, and of what is looked for, on both sides, in this gathering conflict.

POPISH MOVEMENTS.

1. It is matter of general remark in Germany, that Popery has revived its energies during the last ten years. The Rationalist party even, who may be said to have their head-quarters in Leipsic and Dresden, have been awakened thereby into a sense of the danger that threatens them, and are now quite zealous in defending the Reformation, on high religious and theological grounds. The place where popery may be best studied in Germany is *Cologne*. And here it has become quite notorious that the churches are much better attended, that the clergy are far more laborious, and that, as the expression of this newly-infused life, societies of all various kinds, charitable, educational, religious, among all classes of the citizens, are instituted; generally, it is believed, under the secret influence of the Jesuit party. Two circumstances may partially account for this revived energy,—1. The imprisonment of the Archbishop by the late king, for not sanctioning mixed marriages—a "blunder," similar to that of Napoleon, in his treatment of the Pope, and occasioning a similar reaction in favour of the seemingly ill-used and oppressed;—and 2. The steps taken to complete the *Cathedral*, which is countenanced by Protestants as well as Catholics, but which has been made the centre and nucleus of Catholic societies all over Germany. In the Rhine provinces, it is said, the popish feeling is such, as to indicate a leaning to France, in the event of any rupture, which might be attended with serious results.

2. In *Bavaria* the present King has now openly given his coun-

duty of correspondence and common effort among the

tenance to the encouragement of Jesuitism, and great fears are entertained that much of the education of the country may fall into their hands. The book of *Möhler*, late professor in Munich, on the Protestant and Roman Catholic Theology, has been the occasion of great controversy, in which the leading theologians of Germany have taken part. (It has been translated into English.) Among a large section of the Roman Catholic Bavarian clergy, there exists a strong feeling of opposition to these attempts on the part of the King, but, so far as I know, no positive steps have as yet been taken. One circumstance which, though it has practically tended much to keep alive Protestant feeling in Bavaria, indicates the power and spirit of Popery, is the law, that all Protestant soldiers be compelled to kneel on the streets at the passing of the Host. This law, notwithstanding every remonstrance, is still continued. The Queen of Bavaria is a very decided Protestant; as is also the Crown-Princess.

2. In *Switzerland* the proceedings of the Jesuits have been more public and appreciable. All along they have had an immense educational establishment at *Freiburg*, with some hundred teachers, and attended by the sons of noble families from all parts of the Continent, as well as by great crowds of young men intending to enter their order. Of late years this establishment has been re-inforced, and has secretly been exerting its influence among all the Cantons. In several of them this question respecting the Jesuits, is the great element of political difference. In *Lucern*, by a decision of the Council, afterwards ratified by the Canton, the whole education of the Canton seems about to be committed to them; seven additional Jesuit masters being already introduced into that Canton. In other Cantons the question has been mooted; and at present, the one great question in Switzerland is—the duty of the Confederacy in connection with these movements.

4. In *Italy*, the order has had new privileges conferred on it by the present Pope. Jesuitical institutions and seminaries are rising up on all hands. No class of priests is held in greater honour, and great care is taken, that all those who are admitted be men of approved ability and zeal. The order is immensely rich, and is daily obtaining new grants of lands or money, or the like. On the great feast-days, it very frequently is the case that *members of this order alone* preach in the chief churches. They are the most po-

churches; pressing for an immediate discharge of the duty,

pular and favourite confessors also, and are most resorted to by the devout. Thus these two great engines, Preaching, on high days, and the Confessional, are chiefly wielded by them. In Rome their churches are the most frequented of all. The general theological and even literary education in the University and Colleges, has almost entirely fallen into their hands. It is the universal opinion of Protestants in Rome, that *they* are the means employed to carry out the different schemes of the Church.

PROTESTANT MOVEMENTS.

1. During the last ten or fifteen years, great advances have been making towards orthodoxy among the theologians. A better practical spirit in the Church may be dated from the discussions called forth by the *Reformation Jubilee*, (the third centenary).

2. This is especially remarkable in the *Missionary Spirit*, which is daily becoming more prominent. The society of *Basle* has now branches in the various large towns. Many professors give separate courses on the history of missions. Great activity is also shewn in connection with the Bible Society, circulation of tracts in Catholic countries, and the like.

3. For some time back the great body of the evangelical clergy have, by means of PASTORAL CONFERENCES, been striving to create and direct a spirit of Christian organized activity and practical efficiency in the Church. Great steps have been taken in connection with the improvement of their ecclesiastical constitution—with the duty of union among all bodies of true Christians —with the establishment and final settlement of a purer creed, by stricter adherence to their symbolical books. Meetings in churches for prayer, and in connection with missions, are frequent. The churches of the Rationalists are comparatively deserted, and especially in Berlin, Westphalia, Wittemberg, &c. there is a vast accession to the body of faithful preachers. A great spirit of inquiry is abroad as to the state of foreign Evangelical churches, and a general desire is expressed for closer Christian fellowship with them. The greatest result and proof of this tendency to organisation and activity in the church, is in the case of the *Gustavus-Adolphus* Society for the assistance of poor congregations in Catholic countries, especially Bavaria and Austria. It too has its branches all over Protestant Germany. The King of Prussia is patron.

4. *Rongé's Movement.*—His letters have been translated into

seeing that the time is short; and as to the mode and manner of discharging it, saying, in all sincerity,

> ——— "si quid novisti rectius istis
> Candidus imperti; si non, his utere mecum."

several languages, and are read with equal avidity by Protestants and Catholics alike. Independent congregations have now been formed in Breslau, Dresden, Leipsic, Berlin, Magdeburg, &c. The Bishop of Mayence has published a pastoral letter, strongly opposed to what has taken place; and, it is stated, that Rongé has been already denounced in Rome. Some suspense of judgment, in regard to this work, may be necessary, until we know how far it is deeply evangelical, or is simply an honest recoil from the flagrant impostures of Rome, and the holy coat of Treves. Meanwhile, the critical position of the man entitles him to our prayers; and we cannot but admire his lion-like and Luther-like port, his fearless defiance of wrong, and that trumpet sound which has startled Popish Germany to its centre.

I find that I have omitted to state; that in Hungary much greater religious freedom exists than at any former period; and that the position of Austria seems a medium one between two extremes. In Hanover, great excitement has been created by one of the bishops reviving an old Jesuit catechism.

In regard to France, we may refer, for an exposition of the progress of Popery and Jesuitism, to a remarkable article, in the present number of the North British Review, written, evidently, by no religious alarmist, but by a calm observer; while, as to the reviving influence of Evangelical Protestantism, every day brings us new testimonies from godly ministers, and missionary societies, that the fields are white unto the harvest.

LECTURE II.

THE INDEPENDENT EASTERN CHURCHES.

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LECTURE II.

THE INDEPENDENT EASTERN CHURCHES.

ASSOCIATIONS CONNECTED WITH THE HISTORY AND PROSPECTS OF THE EAST—PREVAILING IGNORANCE OF THE STATE OF CHRISTIANITY IN THE EAST—THE GREEK CHURCH—THE ARMENIAN CHURCH—THE SYRIAN CHURCH—THE NESTORIAN CHURCH—THE COPTIC CHURCH—THE ABYSSINIAN CHURCH—THE GENERAL CLAIMS OF THE EASTERN CHURCHES—HOW HELP MAY BE IMMEDIATELY EXTENDED TO THEM BY SCOTLAND.

THE East is associated with all that is interesting in the past history, and glorious in the future prospects, of the world. It was in a twofold sense the cradle of the human race, for there our first parents were created, and their descendants lived in the times which preceded the flood; and there the ark rested, and the preserved family of man again grew and multiplied, and spread abroad over the face of the earth. It was there, that, in utter forgetfulness of God's judgments and impious neglect of God's revelations, those forms of idolatry, superstition, and delusion, were generated and matured, which have changed the glory of God into a lie, and which have injured, and are now injuring, unnumbered millions of immortal souls to their eternal destruction. It was there, that, amid the general apostasy of our race, the

comported with these their high claims to our attention. With those within their borders who have borne the Christian name, we have scarcely formed the least acquaintance. We have been contented to remain ignorant of their principles and practice; of their doctrines, and rites and ceremonies; of their temptations, and trials, and contendings; of their errors, and corruptions and retrogressions. We have extended to them neither our sympathy, nor our prayers, nor our exertions. We have neither marked their alienation from the truth, nor recalled their attention to its solemn testimony. We have conveyed to them neither instruction, nor warning, nor entreaty, nor expostulation. We have mourned more over the desolations of the natural, than over those of the spiritual, Zion. Our past neglect has been complete, and, I will add, criminal; and our consciousness and confession of it should strongly urge us to present consideration and immediate amendment. I trust that it is in some degree an acknowledgment of this duty which has brought us together on this occasion; and I pray that God may vouchsafe to us his blessing, while we refer to the circumstances of the oriental churches. The survey which we can take of them from this place, must be very limited; but if it in any degree arouse attention, or satisfy inquiry, or lead to further investigation, it will not be without its use. I devote the present lecture to the *Independent Eastern Churches*—the Greek, Armenian, Syrian, Nestorian, Coptic, and Abyssinian. On another occasion,—should it occur in providence before I leave this country,—I shall advert to the *Papal Eastern Churches*—the Maronite, Greek-Catholic, Armenian-Catholic, Syrian-Catholic or Chaldean, Coptic-Catholic, and Indian-Catholic Churches.

I. THE GREEK CHURCH.

This Church is to be associated, not so much with the nation of Greece properly so called, as with the language of Greece,—so extensively diffused in Asia, and even in part of Africa, by the conquests of Alexander the Great, that it was the most widely-spoken in the days of our Lord, and selected by the Spirit as the most suitable for the inspired writings of the new covenant,—and, especially, with those countries which were comprehended in the Byzantine dominions, or *Eastern Roman Empire*. It denominates itself ἡ καθολικη καὶ ἀποστολικη ἐκκλεσία ἡ ἀνατολικη, THE CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC ORIENTAL CHURCH. In Turkey in Asia it has four ancient Patriarchates, those of Constantinople, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria. In the north of Syria, and particularly about Aleppo and Antioch, it includes a majority of those who bear the Christian name. In the Páshálik of Damascus it claims, of 78,262—the total Christian population—42,160 souls. In the district of Lebanon, its followers are outnumbered by the Maronites; but to the south it again asserts its predominance. It forms the largest Christian sect in the whole of Syria and the Holy Land, numbering there a population of 345,000 souls, while the other Christian bodies embrace only about 260,000 souls. In Egypt it has two or three thousand members. It is in possession of all the convents in Arabia Petræa, including that of Mount Sinai. In all the districts of Asia Minor, except in that part of it which is sometimes known by the name of the Lesser Armenia, it has more followers than any other church. It is the established religion of the kingdom of

The Eastern and Western Churches have remained divided. Rome aims at satisfying her ambition by the subversion, or conversion, of the Eastern Church, which she denounces as schismatic, and not by union and incorporation.

Of the actual tenets of the Greek Church, we have now a favourable opportunity of forming a correct opinion, by consulting its own Symbolic Books, which for the first time were collated and published in the original Greek, and with a Latin translation, about two years ago.* They consist of several documents. The first of them is the confession of Gennadius, both in the form of a dialogue and a distinct creed, presented by request to the Sultan Muhammad in the fifteenth century, by Gennadius the patriarch of Constantinople. Between this and the second document, is interposed the condemned evangelical confession of Cyrillus Lucaris, a native of Crete, educated at Venice, who ultimately became patriarch of Constantinople, which he published in 1629, and for which, and his embracement and support of the general views of the churches of the Reformation, through a conspiracy of the Pope's emissaries, the clergy of the Greek church, and the Turkish authorities, he was cruelly murdered, by drowning or strangulation, on the 26th of June 1638. The second document is the catechetical "Confession of the Orthodox Faith of the Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ, composed by Peter Mogilas, metropolitan of Kioff," and bearing the confirmation and authority, dated 11th March 1643, of the four oriental patriarchs, and the other ecclesiastical dignitaries and office-bearers of the Greek church. The third contains "The Shield of

* Libri Symbolici Ecclesiæ Orientalis, nunc primum in unum corpus collegit, Ernestus Julius Kimmel. Jenæ, 1843.

Orthodoxy, composed by the local Synod met at Jerusalem under the patriarch Dositheus, composed against the heretical Calvinists," &c. This document, which obtained the subscription of three of the patriarchs, twenty-one bishops, and twenty-three other ecclesiastics, including the Russian legates, after reviewing and condemning the writings of Cyrillus, and anathematizing him on their account, sets forth the eighteen special decrees of the Synod, dated March 1672, with the resolution of certain questions to which some of them incidentally gave rise. A perusal of all these authorities warrants the assertion, that the errors of the Greek Church are nearly as great and detrimental as those of the Church of Rome, and compel us, making all charitable allowance for those within its pale who practically disavow them, to view it as within the dominions of Antichrist. Of this you will be all sorrowfully convinced by an analysis of the proceedings of the Synod now mentioned.

Its first decree embraces the articles of the Nicene Creed, with this difference, on which the Greek Church and all the Oriental Churches lay great stress,—that the Holy Spirit, while consubstantial with the Father and the Son, proceeds only from the Father. In the second, we find it asserted that sacred scripture is to be received "according to the tradition and interpretation of the Catholic Church," which is declared to have "an authority not less than that of sacred scripture," being guided by the unerring wisdom of the Holy Ghost. The third ascribes the election of men to the divine foresight of their good works, and represents the supporters of a

* For an able refutation of the views of the Greek Church, see the Acta et Scripta Theologorum Wirtembergensium, referred to in a subsequent note.

sovereign election, as blasphemously disparaging good works, and not even viewing them as the consequence of election, or a necessary part of salvation. The fourth, as if insinuating that Calvinists charge God with being the active origin of sin, properly ascribes it to men and devils acting in disobedience to the divine will. The fifth maintains the holiness and justice of God in all his dispensations, which though overruling evil for good, never extend to it moral approbation. The sixth notices the fall, and the depravity which originated with it, declaring, however, that "many of the patriarchs and prophets, and innumerable others, both under the shadow [of the law] and the verity [of grace], as the divine forerunner, and especially the eternal Virgin Mary, the Mother of the divine Word," were not naturally tempted to impiety, blasphemy, and other sins specified. The seventh sets forth the conception and birth of Christ without injury to the virginity of Mary, and his ascension and future judgment of the quick and dead. The eighth, while it admits that "Jesus Christ is the only Mediator and ransom of all," expressly declares that, "for presenting our requests and petitions *to him*, we reckon the saints to be intercessors, and above all the immaculate Mother of the divine Word, and likewise the holy angels, whom we know to be our guardians, and the apostles, prophets, martyrs, and whomsoever of his faithful servants he hath glorified, amongst whom we number the bishops and priests, as if surrounding God's altar, and the other just men remarkable for their virtues." The ninth sets forth that no one is saved without faith, but that faith justifies, because "it works by love, that is by the observance of the divine commandments." The tenth, while professedly acknowledging Christ to be the Head of the

church, declares that he governs it by "the ministry of the holy fathers," and condemns the tenet of the Calvinists, that priests can be ordained by priests, holding that a bishop superior to a priest, "the successor of the apostles, communicates, by the imposition of hands and the invocation of the Spirit, the power which he has received, by uninterrupted succession, of binding and loosing, and is the living image of God upon earth, and by the fullest participation of the energy of the perfect Spirit, the fountain of all the sacraments of the church, by which we arrive at salvation." The eleventh sets forth that the catholic church is instructed by the Holy Spirit, "not directly," but "by the holy fathers and overseers of the catholic church." The twelfth reckons those only to be members of the catholic church who receive the faith of Christ both as declared by himself and the apostles and by "the holy œcumenical synods,"* and deport themselves in a becoming manner. The thirteenth intimates, that "that faith, which, as a hand, lays hold of the righteousness of Christ," is not that by which man is justified, but that which, by the good works to which it leads, becomes itself efficacious for our salvation.† The

* The seven first general Councils.

† A very lucid view of the evangelical doctrine of justification by faith, had been given to Jeremiah the patriarch of Constantinople by the Wirtemberg divines in the year 1577, in the course of the correspondence which they maintained with him on the subject of the Augsburg confession. "When we say," say they, "that we are justified before God only by faith in Christ, we wish thus to express ourselves, that by faith only we so apprehend Christ our Saviour, that on account of his most perfect merit, we obtain the remission of our sins and eternal life, and that *we reckon faith in Christ the hand by which we receive those things which Christ our Redeemer has purchased for us.*" They then show clearly how good works are the fruit of faith and part of salvation.—Acta et

fourteenth maintains the undepraved freedom of the will, and the natural ability of man to choose good or evil. The fifteenth enumerates and describes the seven sacraments of the church, namely, Baptism, Confirmation or Chrism, Ordination, the bloodless Sacrifice of the real body and blood of Christ, Matrimony, Confession Penitence and Remission, and Extreme Unction, intimating that they are not naked signs of the promises, but necessarily convey grace to those who partake of them. The sixteenth declares that baptism is absolutely necessary to salvation, even in the case of infants; that it destroys original sin; and is infallibly accompanied by regeneration, and even ultimate salvation.* The seventeenth maintains that in the Eucharist, to be administered only by a duly consecrated priest, the bread and wine, though their accidents remain, are transubstantiated into the real body and blood of Christ, and are to be worshipped and adored with supreme honour, and viewed as a propitiation and sacrifice both for the living and the dead. The eighteenth maintains that the souls of the departed are either in a state of rest or suffering; that those (belonging to the church) who have been removed from the

Scripta Theologorum Wirtembergensium, et Patriarchæ Constantinopolitani D. Hieremiæ. Witebergæ, 1684, p. 165. This is a work which should be in the possession of all missionaries having to do with the Greek Church. It sets forth its tenets, as propounded by the church authorities at Constantinople, and refutes its errors in a very calm and dignified, but earnest, manner, the whole discussion being in Greek, with a Latin translation, by the celebrated Crusius. Many parts of it might be advantageously reprinted, and circulated in the form of tracts.

* These and similar views of baptism, too, are expressed in the form of the administration of the rite used in the Greek Church. Vide Codic. Liturg. Eccles. Univers. Josephi Aloysii Assemani lib. ii. Romæ, 1749.

world with their penitence incomplete, or with a lack of its fruits, or the prayers, watchings, and charities denominated "satisfactions" by the church, are in a state of exclusion from perfect bliss, from which, however, they may be relieved by the prayers and alms of the priests presented in behalf of their relatives, and by the performance of masses. Here almost all the fatal errors associated with Antichrist are most distinctly propounded and defended.

The questions appended to the decrees, in a similar manner certify the apostasy of the Greek Church. That in which it is asked, should Holy Scripture be commonly or indiscriminately read by all Christians, is answered in the negative. In reply to another, the perspicuity of the scriptures is disparaged. In the response given to that which refers to the Canon of Scripture, it is stated, that not only the books which were received by the council of Laodicea, are to be acknowledged as inspired, but also the Wisdom of Solomon, the Book of Judith, of Tobit, the History of the Dragon, the History of Susanna, the Maccabees, and the Wisdom of Sirach. When the honours to be given to saints and their images are made the subjects of inquiry, it is declared that the Virgin Mary is to be worshipped by *hyperdulia;* and the saints and angels by *direct dulia*, referring both to their relation to God and their own sanctity; and the pictures, and relics of the saints, and holy places and articles, such as crosses, and sacramental vases, by *indirect dulia*; while *latria* is to be exclusively reserved for the Divine Spirit. This doctrine is set forth by the invention of distinctions not recognised in the Holy Scriptures, and not to be seen in the nature of things; and it is reduced to practice in direct violation of the express commandments of God,

and by extending the presence, knowledge, power, and offices, and sacredness of God's creatures far beyond their endowments.

The other symbolical books of the Greek church are quite in accordance with that which we have now briefly analysed. The catechetical confession of Mogilas, which contains the fullest exposition of its doctrines, sets forth, along with a mixture of truth, most of the fatal errors to which we have alluded, even more in detail than the decrees of the Synod of Jerusalem. We may extract from it some additional information respecting tenets and observances. It places the traditions of the church on a level with the written word of God, and requires it to be interpreted through the medium of these traditions. It speaks of angels, not merely as spirits ministering according to the direct will of God, but as the guardians of cities, kingdoms, countries, monasteries, and churches, and as both presenting our prayers to God, and interceding in our behalf.* It speaks of the Virgin Mary as the "mother of God."† It represents the devil as put to flight, and the perniciousness of poison as averted by the sign of the cross; and enjoins us to make this sign when we eat and drink, when we sit down or stand up, when we speak or walk, and on all occasions by night and by day, and gives minute directions as to the way in which it is to be made.‡ When alluding to the ascension of Christ, it sets forth that his humanity is present in the Eucharist, and to be venerated and adored as the Saviour himself.§ While it denies that the dead can be delivered from their deprivations, by purgatorial fires or punishments after death, it represents them as receiving

* Quest. 19. † Quest. 40, 43.
‡ Quest. 50, 51, § Quest 56.

in the less glorious mansions of the heavenly regions, —for the Greek Church recognises no *place* intermediate between heaven and hell,—the benefits which they need, from the prayers and masses of the church.* It represents the presidents of the church, as vicariously its heads for Christ, and requires subjection to them as such assembled in general council.† It enumerates nine precepts of the church, which are to be observed. The first enjoins attendance on matins, liturgies (the sacrament of the mass so denominated), vespers, on the Lord's Day, and the appointed festivals. The second appoints four annual fasts, two of forty days each, preceding Christmas and Easter, one from the week after Pentecost to the festivals of Peter and Paul, and another from the first to the fifteenth of August, the day of the Assumption of the Virgin, and two weekly fasts on Wednesdays and Fridays; and forbids fasting on the Lord's Day, except on the "great sabbath," during which he remained in the sepulchre, and some other special days. The third precept enjoins respect to ecclesiastical personages, who receive our confessions and minister to us in holy things. The fourth recommends a quarterly, and in the case of the more devout, a monthly confession, and enjoins at least an annual confession, of sins to the priests, urging the sick especially to wash away their stains by confession and a participation of the sacred supper. The fifth interdicts the reading heretical books and association with the ungodly. The sixth enjoins prayer for ecclesiastical, civil, and military authorities, for the living and dead members of the church, and for the conversion of heretics and schismatics. The eighth

* Quest. 65, 66, 67, 68. † Quest. 85, 86.

forbids sacrilege. And the ninth forbids the celebration of marriage in forbidden vestments, and attendance on forbidden amusements.* The confession expounds at length the doctrine of the "seven sacraments." It declares that they are not only signs and seals of the doctrine of Christ, but present remedies for overcoming the infirmities of sin. Baptism, which destroys original sin, and effects regeneration, is to be practised by a threefold immersion in water, and always by priests, except in cases of urgent necessity. Chrism or confirmation—by oil, balsam, and other unguents, consecrated by the highest ecclesiastic, and symbolic and communicative of the unction and gifts of the Holy Spirit,—to be applied to the different members of the body, is immediately to follow baptism. The sacrament of the Eucharist is said to be more excellent than any other of the sacraments, nay than all of them united together, and to conduce more than they do to the attainment of salvation. A duly consecrated priest is necessary to its dispensation. The bread used must be fermented, and a little water must be added to the wine, to represent that which flowed from the Saviour's side. These materials must be viewed as changed into the real body and blood of Christ by the words of consecration; and the sacrament must be considered a commemoration, a propitiation, and a protection and defence against the assaults of the devil. In ordination, by which the succession of power to the priestly office in the church is continued, regard must be had to the probity, and knowledge of candidates, and the soundness and completeness of the members of their body. The minor orders of reader, singer, candle-lighter, and sub-

* Quest. 87–95.

deacon are recognised, and reference is made to the Directories, in which their duties, and those of other ecclesiastical office-bearers, are described.* The necessity and efficacy of auricular confession and clerical absolution are emphatically declared; and meritorious prayers, alms, fastings, pilgrimages to holy places, and religious genuflexions, are sometimes to be added to them, that they may restore the effects of baptism and afford grounds for confidence and peace. Marriage, except as being denominated a sacrament, is rightly treated of in the confession. The *Euchelaion*, corresponding with extreme unction, is to be given to the sick as well as to the dying, is sometimes attended with the healing of the body as well as the soul, and fails not to be accompanied with the remission of sins in the case of those who are penitent. All these explanations and statements are given in the confession under the head of FAITH. Under that of HOPE, there is given a tolerably good, though not an entirely approveable, exposition of the Lord's Prayer and of the beatitudes contained in the sermon on the Mount. Under that of CHARITY, the last of the treatise, in which our duty both to God and man is considered, both truth and error are sadly intermingled. Almsgiving is there set forth as an expiation, and the antiscriptural distinction of mortal and venial sins is recognised. Under the first commandment, the worship of saints and angels is vindicated by the identical arguments

* In the works in which the ministry is more particularly treated of, it is stated, that the secular clergy are allowed to marry once; but that those who do so are debarred from the episcopacy, an office which is reserved for individuals of the regular or monastic clergy, who, on account of their vows and self-restraints, are supposed to be holier than those who have retained and used their Christian liberty.

current in the Church of Rome. Under the second commandment, which is separated from the first as by Protestants and the Jews, the worship of images (pictures of the saints only are used in the Greek Church) and of holy objects is vindicated in a similar manner, and particularly by the authority of the seventh general council. In connexion with the fourth commandment, the sacred days appointed by the church are brought to notice.

It will be seen from these brief, but distinct references, that the Greek Church has departed far indeed from the simplicity and truth which are in Christ Jesus. It agrees with the Church of Rome in most matters of the greatest moment. It has the essential characteristic of Antichrist, inasmuch as it places the priests on earth, and the saints and angels in heaven, intermediate between the soul and the Saviour, and allows the merits of the Son of God to be dispensed by the minister, and purchased by the prayers, and penances, and services of the worshipper. Though it administers the initiatory rite of Christianity, without many of the impious and absurd concomitant ceremonies which have been added to it by the Romish Church, it forms the same judgment of its spiritual efficacy. Though it administers the Eucharist in both kinds to the laity, it holds forth the doctrine of absolute transubstantiation, and renewed propitiation. Within its pale it cherishes, in its worship of saints, angels, and their representations, and sacred things, that very implied polytheism and idolatry for which Romanism is so very abhorrent to the Christian mind. Though it disclaims works of supererogation, and does not profess to dispense indulgences, it makes the services of the living available for the dead. Its superiority to Rome in any

respect principally arises from its inability or unwillingness to follow out its principles to their legitimate length. Practically, however, it is not so consolidated and fearful in its power as that tyrannical institution. It does not pretend to have an infallible earthly head. Though it makes the general councils the interpreters of Christian doctrine, and disparages the Scriptures, both by adding to their contents and questioning their intelligibility, it does not always systematically oppose their circulation and perusal. Its symbolical books, though they have had a general, have not yet had a universal, ratification; and, in Russia in particular, other compendiums of Christian doctrine, written generally in an evangelical strain, have been composed and published with high recommendations. Of these the most remarkable is the Summary of Christian Divinity by Platon, late Metropolitan of Moscow, which has been translated from the Slavonian into English by Dr Pinkerton,* and the doctrines of which, according to the testimony of that zealous agent of the Bible Society, in his valuable work on "Russia," published a few years ago,† and the no less interesting "Biblical Researches" in the same country,‡ of his former associate Dr Henderson, are received by a large portion of the Russian clergy of all orders, including the instructors of candidates for the holy ministry.

Compared with the doctrines and sacraments of the Greek church, to which our notices have hitherto prin-

* The Present State of the Greek Church in Russia, or a Summary of Christian Doctrine by Platon, late Metropolitan of Moscow. Translated from the Slavonian. With a preliminary Memoir on the Ecclesiastical Establishment in Russia; and an Appendix, containing an account of the origin and different sects of Russian Dissenters.

† London, 1833. ‡ London, 1826.

cipally referred, its usual forms of worship are only of secondary importance, but not altogether to be overlooked. Its voluminous liturgical works, I have only partially examined. The following account of them from the pen of a gentleman long resident at Constantinople, I believe to be correct.

"Dr King judiciously remarks, that by liturgy, the office of the Eucharist only was described, nor has it at present a different meaning in the Greek church, the four liturgies of which are those of St James, St Basil, St Chrysostom, and those of the pre-sanctified mysteries.

"The first of these is asserted to be spurious by Smith, and therefore obsolete. The liturgies of St Basil and St Chrysostom are essentially the same; but the former being the longer, is used only on certain days, while the latter is considered as the ordinary communion service. That of the pre-sanctified is appropriated for Wednesdays and Fridays in Lent, or the great fast.

"The service of the Greek church, like that of Rome at present, and that of all other churches before the Reformation, is principally choral. Their canons and antiphonies are hymns, or portions of Scripture, set to music, first recited by the minister, and then chanted by the choir, but without musical instruments, which are not admitted in accompaniment. The ectinèa corresponds with our litany, but is never so called by the Greeks. They have several in every service. In consequence of a great variety of these and other forms, their books of offices are numerous and bulky.

"The Menæon contains the hymns and services for every festival, as it occurs in the calendar, and is divided into twelve volumes folio, each volume comprising the

service of a month. The Octoechos, is so called from eight tones or voices, which are fixed to particular hymns, and which serve as a rule for singing the rest. It is divided into two volumes folio.

" The Synnaxar, or biographical history of the saints, comprehends four volumes folio, of which an appropriate portion is read on every saint's day. To these must be added the psalter and hours, the common service, the four gospels, the two triodes, the book of prayer, the ritual, and (which is very necessary in such a complex mass of liturgical forms) the regulation, wherein are contained directions how they are to be used.

" Of the Menologion it is sufficient to remark, that it nearly resembles idolatry; they admit pictures into their churches, not merely as ornamental, but as indispensable in the ceremonial of their religion. They are usually attached to the screen which secretes the chancel, and from thence receives the name of iconostas. In the arguments advanced by Greek theologists in defence of this preference of painting to sculpture, there appears to be little solidity. They consider themselves as secure under the authority of St John Damascenus. In the emblematical and mystical properties, attributed to clerical vestments, the Greek church rivals the barbarism of the monkish ages.*

During my journey from India to this country in the year 1843, particularly in the Turkish empire, I had many opportunities of observing the actual state of the Greek church, on whose tenets and ritual I need not farther enlarge. Of the observations which I then made of it, I shall now give such a brief summary as is

* Dallaway's Constantinople, p. 375.

expected of me. It is my heartfelt desire to speak with the utmost kindness towards the individuals and classes of men to whom I may refer, but at the same time with a due regard to the interests of truth and righteousness and the purity of the Church of Christ.

Among the few adherents of the Greek church whom I met in Egypt, I found one family of which the head appeared to entertain views of divine truth essentially evangelical, to cultivate personal godliness, and to take a warm interest in the advancement of the kingdom of the Redeemer upon earth. He lives on the shores of the Red Sea, from which he has never been absent. His vernacular tongue is Arabic; but he has a tolerable acquaintance with English, which he has turned to some account in the perusal of one or two of our best books on practical religion. Attention to the tenets and observances of different denominations of Christians, and the history of the church, he said, has taught him charity. He possessed a copy of the Scriptures in Arabic, with the contents of which he appeared tolerably familiar; and he gratefully received from me a few of the Arabic publications of the Church Missionary press at Malta, and recommended his friends to make application for a supply, which they readily did. He took a great interest in the Arabic translation of the abridgement of Dr Keith's admirable work on Prophecy, and of the General Assembly's Letter to the Jews. He intimated his readiness to send one of his young relatives to Bombay for education in our missionary seminary on my return to India. He gave me and my fellow-travellers such introductory letters as he thought would facilitate our movements and inquiries. It would have been joy to my heart to have met with many such persons in the course of my peregrinations.

From the inmates of St Catherine's Monastery at Mount Sinai, who, including both the regular clergy and their lay-assistants, are twenty-three in number, my fellow-travellers and myself received much kindness. Like all the other recluses of the Greek church, the monks belong to the order of St Basil, the rules of which they rigidly observe. Their seclusion they do not seem to have improved for the cultivation of deep and rational devotion, for pursuits of study, or for evangelistic effort, in which,—if their perpetual vows through which they deprive themselves of their Christian liberty could be overlooked,—some apology might be found for their situation. Some of them confessed to me that, in the multiplicity of their public authorised services, they could dispense altogether with private prayer, and the perusal of the Scriptures. It was painful indeed to witness the manner in which they conduct divine worship in the church of the convent, dedicated to the "Metamorphosis," or Transfiguration. The lengthy Greek service, they read and chanted with the greatest irreverence and altogether unintelligible rapidity. Their ceremonious genuflexions and prostrations, and invocations, before the pictures of the saints, the large cross on the screen which separates the altar from the nave, and at the feet of their own superior, bore but too certain evidence of their practice of idolatry under the very shadow of that mountain, from which God himself spake the words, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters under the earth." When they shewed us their library, in which we found a considerable number of works in the Arabic and Syriac, as well as Greek, languages, both printed and in manuscript, they

could give us no general account of its contents, and acknowledged that, excepting its ecclesiastical service-books, it was to them merely useless lumber. The copies of the Scriptures too, which had been presented to them by Dr Joseph Wolff, during his first visit to the convent, for their individual use, had been added to the common stock, and were quite neglected. Only one or two of them appeared to be able to converse in Arabic with the surrounding children of the desert, the religious instruction of whom, they confessed, they entirely neglected. No greater proof of the want of pastoral care of themselves, or rather of their predecessors, can be found than the fact, that they have allowed the body of the *Jebelíyah*, or mountaineers, who are entirely dependent upon them as their menial servants, and who are the descendants of Christian slaves said to have been sent to the convent by the Emperor Justinian, to become Musalmáns. I did not hear of a single Arab to whom they have access having been instructed by any of them in the faith of Christ. Except in as far as they practise hospitality to travellers who visit the grand and terrific scenery and hallowed localities among which they dwell, they seem never to aim at usefulness among their fellow-creatures. Their merits in the matter to which I allude, all are most ready to admit who have participated in their kindness. It is in acknowledgment, however, of something else than this service, that their convent has for ages met with favour from the members of the Greek church. Their whole establishment, and especially their church, are viewed as so sacred throughout its bounds, that offerings to them are considered as especially meritorious, and have been accumulated within them by all classes of the people, and particularly by the Greek and Russian Emperors.

The Greek monks of the Holy Land with whom we came into contact at Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Már Sábá, Nazareth, and other places, we found to correspond very much in character, attainments, and occupation with those of Mount Sinai. The great Christian pilgrimage conducted under their direction at the time of Easter, which we witnessed as far as our feelings could permit us, appears to be calculated to produce anything but hallowed associations and holy impressions on the multitudes, from all parts of the Levant, who seek its blessings. A similar remark may be extended to the pilgrimage of the Latins, and other denominations of Christians. The Greeks, it must be remembered, however, are peculiarly culpable in the confusion and revelry which they generate, and imposture which they practise. It is under their auspices, that the miracle of the holy fire from heaven, as it is alleged, is annually exhibited to the people. We were so shocked by what we witnessed of the preparations for this lying wonder at the church of the Holy Sepulchre, that after having handed in our letters of introduction to the metropolitan, we found ourselves compelled to withdraw from the scene. The whole transaction, I was informed by those who had witnessed it, surpasses even the usual description of its presumption and impiety given by travellers and observers. Of these let the following, which is the latest which I have seen, be taken as a specimen.

"The miraculous Greek fire," says Mr Calman,* "which takes place on the Saturday of the Greek Easter week, serves in the hands of the Greek and Armenian priests, the same purpose that the keys of Peter do in

* A highly respectable Jewish convert residing at Jeursalem, and well known to many in this country.

the hands of his skilful successors, the Popes; it unlocks every coffer and purse of the pilgrims, and renders them at the disposal of the inventors and perpetrators of this lying wonder.

"To notice all that was passing within the church of the Holy Sepulchre during the space of more than twenty-four hours, would be next to impossible; because it was one continuation of shameless madness and rioting, which would have been a disgrace to Greenwich and Smithfield fairs. Only suppose for a moment, the mighty edifice crowded to excess with fanatic pilgrims of all the Eastern churches, who, instead of lifting pure hands to God, without wrath and quarrelling, are led by the petty jealousies about the precedency which they should maintain in the order of their processions, into tumults and fighting, which can only be quelled by the scourge and whip of the followers of the false prophet. Suppose further, these thousands of devotees running from one extreme to the other, from the extreme of savage irritation to that of savage enjoyment, of mutual revellings and feastings; like Israel of old, who, when they made the golden calf, were eating, and drinking, and rising up to play. Suppose troops of men, stripped half naked to facilitate their actions, running, trotting, jumping, galloping to and fro, the breadth and length of the church; walking on their hands with their feet aloft in the air; mounting on one another's shoulders, some in a riding and some in a standing position, and by the slightest push are all sent down to the ground in one confused heap, which made one fear for their safety. Suppose further, many of the pilgrims dressed in fur-caps, like the Polish Jews, whom they feigned to represent, and whom the mob met with all manner of contempt and insult, hurry-

ing them through the church as criminals who had been just condemned, amid loud execrations and shouts of laughter, which indicated that Israel is still a derision amongst these heathens, by whom they are still counted as sheep for the slaughter. All these, and similar proceedings, marked the introduction of this holy miraculous fire; and when questioned about the propriety of such conduct within a Christian place of worship, and with the name of religion, the priests will tell you, that they once tried to get quit of these absurdities, and the holy fire was withdrawn in consequence of it!

"About two o'clock on Saturday afternoon, the preparations for the appearance of the miraculous fire commenced. The multitude who had been heretofore in a state of frenzy and madness, became a little more quiet; but it proved a quiet that precedes a thunderstorm. Bishops and priests in their full canonicals, then issued forth from their respective quarters, with flags and banners, crucifixes and crosses, lighted candles and smoking censors, to join or rather to lead a procession, which moved thrice round the church, invoking every picture, altar, and relic, in their way, to aid them in obtaining the miraculous fire. The procession then returned to the place from whence it started, and two grey-headed bishops, the one of the Greek, the other of the Armenian church, were hurled by the soldiers through the crowd, into the apartment which communicates with that of the Holy Sepulchre, where they locked themselves in; there the marvellous fire was to make its first appearance, and from thence issue through the small circular windows and the door, for the use of the multitude. The eyes of all men, women, and children, were now directed towards the Holy Sepulchre with an anxious suspense, awaiting the issue of their expectation.

"The mixed multitude, each in his or her own language, were pouring forth their clamorous prayers to the Virgin and the saints, to intercede for them on behalf of the object for which they were assembled; and the same were tenfold increased by the fanatic gestures and the waving of the garments by the priests of the respective communions who were interested in the holy fire, and who were watching by the above mentioned door and circular windows, with torches in their hands, ready to receive the virgin flame of the heavenly fire, and convey it to their flocks. In about twenty minutes from the time the bishops locked themselves in the apartment of the Holy Sepulchre, the miraculous fire made its appearance through the door and the two small windows, as expected. The priests were the first who lighted their torches, and they set out on a gallop in the direction of their lay brethren; but some of these errandless and profitless messengers had the misfortune to be knocked down by the crowd, and had their firebrands wrested out of their hands; but some were more fortunate, and safely reached their destination, around whom the people flocked like bees, to have their candles lighted. Others however were not satisfied at having the holy fire second hand, but rushed furiously towards the Holy Sepulchre, regardless of their own safety, and that of those who obstructed their way; though it has frequently happened that persons have been trampled to death on such occasions. Those who were in the galleries let down their candles by cords, and drew them up when they had succeeded in their purpose. In a few minutes thousands of flames were ascending, the smoke and the heat of which rendered the church like the bottomless pit. To satisfy themselves, as well as to convince the

Latins, (who grudge so profitable as well as so effectual a piece of machinery being in the hands of the schismatical Greeks and Armenians, and one which augments the power of the priests and the revenue of the convents, and who therefore exclaim against the miraculous fire), the pilgrims, women as well as men, shamefully expose their bare bosoms to the action of the flame of their lighted candles, to make their adversaries believe the miraculous fire differs from an ordinary one, in being perfectly harmless. The two bishops, who a little while before locked themselves in the apartment of the Holy Sepulchre, now sallied forth out of it. When the whole multitude had their candles lighted, the bishops were caught by the crowd, lifted upon their shoulder, and carried to their chapels amidst loud and triumphant acclamations. They soon, however, reappeared, at the head of a similar procession as the one before, as a pretended thank-offering to the Almighty for the miraculous fire vouchsafed, thus daring to make God a partaker in their lie. An express messenger was immediately sent off to Bethlehem, the birthplace of Christ, to inform the brethren there, and to invite them also to offer up their tribute of thanks for the transcendant glory of the day. Thus closed the lying wonders of the holy week of Easter."*

This whole fraud, and these riotous Saturnalia,—I should rather say downright *Satanalia*,—approved as they are by the body of the Greek ecclesiastics at Jerusalem, are such as ought entirely to exclude those who have the control and management of them from Protestant approbation and ecclesiastical intercommunion. That

* Herschell's Visit to my Fatherland in 1843, pp. 173-180.

the very highest of the Greek clergy at Jerusalem are answerable for the fraud is evident, not only from their tolerance of it, but from the direct statements which they give when interrogated on the subject. The Greek metropolitan even was not ashamed to *write* to Joseph Wolff as follows:—"The holy fire was known in the time of the Greek emperors; it was then seen in the holy sepulchre, and also in the time that the Crusaders were in possession of the place. Many of the Latin historians mention it. From the time of the invasion of the Turks till now, the holy fire is seen both by believers and unbelievers."* The long continuance of an evil practice does not hallow it in the sight of God.

In connexion with the Greek pilgrimage to Jerusalem, I may mention that the ecclesiastics at the Holy City are in the habit of furnishing the pilgrims with most impious and delusive certificates of the pardon and absolution of their sins, on account of the alleged merit of the journey which they undertake.

I was glad to learn, during my journey through Syria, that the services of the Greek church are there generally conducted through the medium of a language vernacular to the people of the country,—the Arabic.† The secular priests, though they read with notable rapidity, were not so faulty in this respect as the monks. They seldom, except on extraordinary occasions, *preach* to the people, and hence the great ignorance of multitudes bearing the Christian name. The disuse of preaching is not confined to Syria. It is general throughout the whole

* Wolff's Journal.

† In Greece, on the coasts of Asia Minor, and in Turkey in Europe, the service is performed in ancient Greek. In Russia, the medium adapted for it is the Sclavonic.

bounds of the Greek church. Respecting Greece itself, this statement is made in the Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions for 1841:— "What the country needs above all things is, an educated, pious priesthood, which shall preach the gospel in the churches from Sabbath to Sabbath. This necessity is beginning to be felt especially at Athens, where the demoralizing influences are greater than elsewhere. It is true two or three preachers were appointed two or three years ago for the kingdom, and these have occasionally preached a sermon in different parts; but excepting these, and the regular preaching of Dr King at Athens, probably not a sermon was preached in the Greek language during that period until the last spring. Then four young men, who had gone through the regular course of classical and theological study, were directed to preach in the churches in Athens." In this neglect of religious instruction through the most impressive mode of its communication, the distribution of copies of the Scriptures, and Christian publications, among the members of the Greek church in the East who are able to peruse them, becomes a duty of even more than ordinary importance. With a sense of this duty, the American missionaries, the principal protestant ministers expressly appointed to seek the revival of evangelical religion in the regions to which I now refer, are deeply impressed. It is a happy circumstance that *some* of the Greek ecclesiastics themselves are not indisposed to encourage the circulation of the word of eternal life. Procopius, the second in authority amongst them at Jerusalem, proved for a considerable time a warm friend and useful agent of the Bible Society. Isa Petrus, too, at that place, is well known to the readers of missionary

journals as a friend of the same institution. Wherever I went in Syria, I found the laity of the Greek church anxious to obtain copies of the Bible, and not unwilling to receive publications pregnant with the statements of evangelical truth. Having taken with me a large supply, I was able to make a pretty extensive distribution throughout the country, except at the places at which the missionaries usually labour. At the town of Hásbeiya, near the farthest source of the Jordan, I was engaged for some hours in meeting the demands which were made upon my stores. Among the Arabic books which I distributed were several copies of a Life of Luther, and other Protestant publications. When the Greek priests saw them in the hands of the people, they became quite infuriated, and sent an agent to beg me to order their restoration. I told the people that, as a friend of religious liberty, peaceable discussion, and prayerful inquiry, I left the matter entirely in their own hands. They declared that they would keep what they had received at all hazards; and they heard the threats of the agents of the priests without being moved. Mr Smith, my fellow-traveller from Bombay, who took a deep interest in the affair, and who strenuously defended the rights of the people, remarked to me that more would afterwards be heard of this matter,—an anticipation which has been most remarkably fulfilled. Before we left Hásbeiya, a Druse of considerable intelligence told us, when we were quietly seated with him on the roof of his house, that a considerable number of persons in the town had for some time been anxious to declare themselves *Protestants*; and that, if we could promise them protection from England, a hundred families, he was sure, would immediately join our commu-

nion. The effects of the ministrations of the excellent missionaries at Beirut, who had occasionally visited the town, and at one time maintained a school for the instruction of its youth, had thus begun to appear. Some months after our visit, a considerable number of persons actually declared themselves Protestants, and one hundred and twenty of them were formed into a religious community by the Rev. Eli Smith, who hastened to visit them from Beirut. Connected with this transaction, I solicit your attention to the following extract of a letter from my excellent friend and for some time fellow-traveller, the Rev. William Graham, missionary of the Irish Presbyterian Church at Damascus. On the 17th of May last, he says, "one hundred and fifty of the Greek church have become Protestants. They wrote a petition to the British Consul in Damascus, praying to be taken under the protection of England, and vowing before God and man that, rather than return to the superstitions of their ancestors, they would suffer to be chopped like tobacco. This protection the Consul could not give, as the Protestant religion is not recognised nor tolerated legally in the Turkish empire. The Greek Patriarch [of Antioch], who has his residence in Damascus, was furious, and threatened to force them to return to the Church. The Turkish authorities also took the alarm. They held their secret councils, and discussed what was to be done. Some did not think much of the matter; others were clear for compelling the people to return, and several saw in it the design of England to gain a party in the country, that she might have some plea for taking forcible possession of it. In this state of matters, the affair was by common agreement referred to Constantinople." The English, Prussian,

and, I believe, French authorities, much to their credit, recommended that these Christians should not be persecuted for their opinions; and the government of the Sultan granted them permission to return to Hásbeiya, with the promise of protection, on condition that they should pay the usual taxes, and conduct themselves in a peaceable manner. The Greek priests were greatly incensed at this result; and, under the instigation of Russia, it is alleged, they induced the adherents of the Greek church to make a show of leaving Hásbeiya on the return of the Protestant party, that the Turkish government might have the case again thrown upon its consideration, as Hásbeiya could not contain the members of both churches! The last tidings which I have received of this affair are contained in a letter of Mr Graham, dated January 1845: "You may be interested," he says, "to hear more about the Protestants of Hasbeiya. They have been excommunicated by the Greek patriarch, or his priests, in the strictest form, and all intercourse with them interdicted. Their teacher has been stoned, and fifteen families driven from their houses. They are thrown for support on the American missionaries. Notwithstanding these evils, and even greater, which may yet arise, I think it probable that the principle of the toleration and recognition of Protestantism will be established. It is interesting to know, that the children of these poor people are committing to memory the Shorter Catechism." This movement, I have no hesitation in saying, is the most important which in our day has taken place in the Holy Land. Fervent should be our prayers that it may be overruled for the establishment of the liberties of Protestantism in that most important locality, on the same footing that those of the

Greek, Latin, and other churches have been secured. Our country has a perfect right to interfere in the case, both on the grounds of humanity and religious affinity, and the implied engagements connected with the ejection, in behalf of the Sultán, by the European powers, of Muhammed Ali.*

* "England having, in conjunction with other Christian powers, succeeded in restoring Syria to the Sultan, she is entitled to expect that the Sultan, in return for such assistance, should secure his Christian subjects from oppression."—*Lord Palmerston to Chekib Effendi, June* 15, 1841. "On the 4th instant, I had an interview at Pera with the Internuncio and Monsieur de Titow, to concert the measures to be adopted with regard to Syria. Mr Wood and Monsieur Laurin were present. It was agreed to advise the Porte. . . . 3. To issue positive orders to all Ottoman functionaries in Syria, to abstain from offering any impediment whatever to the free exercise by Christians of the rites of their religion."—*British Ambassador at Constantinople to Lord Palmerston, June* 8, 1841. It would be strange indeed if England were to seek protection for all classes of Christians in Syria *except Protestants*. The interests of Protestantism in the Turkish empire, when connected with the first principles of *toleration*, will not, I am certain, be compromised by Sir Stratford Canning, Her Majesty's present able representative at Constantinople. The decided stand which he lately made for the prevention of the execution of penitent Christian apostates returning from the profession of Muhammadism,—in which he was happily supported by the representatives of Prussia and France,—experienced complete success; and called forth the official declaration from the Sultan, the most remarkable ever heard from his lips, that "neither should Christianity be insulted in his dominions, nor should Christians be in any way persecuted for their religion." To secure complete toleration in Turkey, this declaration should be held as embracing Protestants, and extended to converts from Muhammadism, as well as to those who may have been born within the pale of the Christian church. Connected with this latter matter, the Free Church of Scotland lately addressed Her Majesty's Minister for Foreign Affairs. Lord Aberdeen has admitted its importance. His Prussian Majesty, who is deeply alive to the interests of Christianity in the East, it is understood, will keep it steadily in view.

At Beirut, I had the pleasure of seeing a few members of the Greek church, united with others, in attendance upon the ministrations of the American missionaries, to whose able, zealous, and efficient labours, I have pleasure in bearing my humble testimony.

At Smyrna, where the Greeks are a numerous, spirited, and influential people, I had the pleasure of finding the cause of general education prospering in their schools and seminaries, which, in company with a gentleman of considerable literary attainments, I had an opportunity of visiting and examining. The attempt is there made, with encouraging success, to revive a knowledge of the ancient Greek literature, and to associate it with the study of modern philosophy. One of the professors of the Lyceum, I found with a translation of Dugald Stewart's Philosophy of the Human Mind before him when he was instructing his class. When I asked if he had any candidates for the sacred ministry students of the Scotch metaphysics, he said, smiling, This study is not for the *priests* of Smyrna. It was with extreme sorrow, that I found the scriptures, except in the form of most meagre extracts, banished from the Greek institutions there. Giving vent to this feeling, it was said to me by one of the teachers, "Why, we are afraid that as the style of the New Testament is not classical, it may defeat our attempts to revive the pure Hellenic Greek!" On my mentioning this circumstance to Mr Temple, the veteran American missionary, he said, "The Greeks now, as of old, seek after wisdom, but it is not that wisdom which is from above." The Greeks at Smyrna have a press of their own, at which both a newspaper and magazine are printed; but in a set of its publications which I ordered and received, I do not find many bear-

ing directly on the subject of religion. Some excellent works, however, have issued from the press of the American Mission. In modern Greek, Armenian, and Armeno-Turkish, works to the extent of 50,000,000 pages have been there printed.

The Greeks at Constantinople, as far as I could learn, though advancing in general and social improvement, are not yet becoming alive to the supreme importance of regulating their faith by a personal acquaintance with the word of truth. Religion with them, as with the Smyrniotes, occupies but a small share in their system of education. The Bible, in modern Greek, however, has been circulated among them to some extent, through the agency of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the American Mission. The translation used was made by Ilarion, the ex-bishop of Bulgaria, who is described as the "most learned and most indefatagible of the Greek hierarchy,"* and, I believe, that, as a literary work, it has received the highest recommendations. Little if any thing is being done toward the enlightenment of the members of the Greek church in the different provinces of Turkey in Europe; but I heard from our American friends, that they have some intention of directing their attention to Bulgaria, where education and instruction are much needed by its simple and neglected population. On both sides of the Danube, there are other large and interesting districts which have powerful claims on evangelical benevolence.

As the result of all my observation and inquiry respecting the Greek church, I would say, that at present it seems a very difficult matter to impregnate it with evangelical truth and influence; and that its circum-

* Macfarlane's Constantinople, p. 400.

stances are less encouraging than those of the other Oriental churches. So little has been done, and is now doing for it, however, compared with its magnitude, that we have little reason to restrict ourselves in our exertions in its behalf, either by its apathy or its opposition. The Protestant church should not overlook that access to it which at present it has in the Turkish empire, for it is very questionable whether, if political power were in the hands of the Greek church itself, it would tolerate decided efforts for reviving throughout its bounds the purity and power of Primitive Christianity. Its conduct in the affair of the Protestants of Hásbeiya, whose case we have been called to notice, is characterized both by intolerance and persecution.

II. THE ARMENIAN CHURCH.

The Armenian Church is next in importance to the Greek church in the East. It derives its name from the country of Armenia, of which Mount Ararat may be reckoned the centre. The greater Armenia comprehends the country lying west of the Caspian Sea, south of the Caucasian range, north of a line drawn from the north-east corner of the Mediterranean to the north-west corner of the Caspian, and east of Asia Minor. The lesser Armenia comprehends the eastern part of Asia Minor. The members of the Armenian church, intermingled throughout with the followers of the false prophet, inhabit the whole extent of this country, except the portions of Georgia in which the members of the Greek church abound, and the hilly districts around Uramiah, inhabited by the Nestorians and Kurds. They are scattered, however, also, over the whole of Asia Minor; and are

numerous at Constantinople. In Syria they number several thousands, and in Egypt a few hundred souls. In Persia a good many of the descendants of 80,000 families, carried captive by Sháh Abbás, still reside. Some of them are to be found in the countries east of Persia as far as Kábul, and in India, particularly at Bombay and Calcutta. A few of them as merchants have proceeded eastward as far as Batavia. Individual families are established at Venice, Trieste, Vienna, and other towns of Europe. I have seen various estimates of their numbers, from ten to two millions. Mr Lucas Balthazar, the intelligent editor of an Armenian newspaper, entitled "The Dawn of Ararat," published at Smyrna, stated to me that he calculates them at five millions, of whom he supposes two millions are to be found in the Russian provinces of Eriván, Karabágh, and Tiflis, recently conquered from Persia; two millions in the Turkish dominions; and one million in Persia, and India, and other remote countries. I find by reference to the statistics of Russia, that he has over-estimated the Armenian subjects of that empire by one-half. Turkey may have a million ~~and a half~~ of Armenians under its sway, and Persia and other distant lands half a million. Altogether, then, we may have about two millions and a half of Armenians in the different countries of their dispersion. In the valuable Researches of Smith and Dwight in Armenia, they are estimated at two millions.

Armenia is connected with the ancient history of Assyria, Media, and Persia, and particularly with the dynasties of Arsaces and Sásán. The notices which can be collected of the early conveyance of the Gospel to its different regions and the surrounding territories are remarkably interesting, as they make us acquainted with

the first triumphs of Christianity over the religion of Zoroaster, who is said to have been born within its borders—as they certify to us that Armenia was the first country converted as such to our holy faith—and as they make us acquainted with the stedfastness of the early professors of the truth, tried by seasons of fierce and long-continued persecution. The greatest instrument of its early evangelization was Gregory the Enlightener, the son of Anax, a Parthian prince. He was instructed in the doctrines of Christianity at Cesarea in Cappadocia, and ordained a bishop by Leontius of that city, who signed the decrees of the Council of Nice. He was one of the most distinguished men of the eastern world. Tiridates the Great, and a large portion of the Armenian people, received baptism at his hands so early as the year 302 of our era. He was devoted, heart and soul, to his work—which he advanced by most enlightened educational measures, as well as by the public proclamation of the Gospel.*

It is supposed that the monophysite doctrines were propagated in Armenia by Samuel, the disciple of Barsumas, who, about A.D. 460, introduced the doctrines of Eutyches into Syria. A synod of ten bishops, assembled at Thevin in the year 536 by Nerses the patriarch of Ardaghar, condemned the decision of the Council of Chalcedon, recognising the two natures of Christ; and from this time may be dated the separation

* See History of Vartan, and the battle of the Armenians by Elisæus, translated by Professor Neumann of Munich, and Avdall's History of Armenia. The notices of the early propagation and persecutions of Christianity in Armenia and the adjoining territories, I have endeavoured to collect in a sermon, entitled the Doctrine of Jehovah addressed to the Parsis.

of the Armenian from the Greek Church.* In the proceedings of the Jerusalem Synod of the Greek Church, of which we have already given the substance, the Armenians, as well as the other independent eastern churches, are represented as agreeing with the Greek Church, except in so far as their own "special heresy" is concerned. The statement made respecting this matter is substantially correct.

The heads of the Armenian Church, recognised from ancient times, are the patriarchs of Echmiadzin and Ardaghar in the Greater, and of Sis in Cilicia, in the Lesser, Armenia. Each of these dignitaries, and particularly the chief of the See first mentioned, receives the additional title of Catholicos. To them are to be added the titular patriarch of Constantinople, recognised by the Turkish Government as the head of its Armenian subjects, and the titular patriarch of Jerusalem. Below them are the bishops of towns and districts—who like themselves must be selected from the monkish orders,—who, as in the Romish and Greek Churches, are denominated the regular clergy, and supposed to be possessed of peculiar sanctity; the secular or parish clergy; and the four minor orders of porters, readers, exorcists, and candle-holders. The monkish clergy are denominated Vartabads or Doctors, and it is their peculiar office to teach and preach—duties, however, seldom discharged by them, even when they are elevated to the grade of bishop. No lay-monks are recognised. The parochial clergy, who are the most numerous, must all be married, and have at least one child before they are appointed to

* Conciliationis Ecclesiæ Armenæ cum Romana ex ipsis Armenorum Patrum et Doctorum Testimoniis, auctore Clemente Galano. Romæ, 1680. Vol. i. p. 86 et seq. Fabricii Lux Evangelii, p. 644.

office; and, what is well worthy of notice, they are chosen for ordination by the members of the respective congregations. The most objectionable arrangements connected with the Armenian ministry, consist in their maintenance of confession, both formal and extemporaneous, and subsequent absolution.* They do not pretend to dispense indulgences, but they foster the principles of self-righteousness, by prescribing meritorious "satisfactions," by fastings, prayers, almsgivings, pilgrimages, and masses.

Of the views of the Armenians respecting the nature and person of Christ, which formed the occasion of their separation from the Greek Church, the following extracts from one of the letters of the Rev. Eli Smith, present us with a statement quite in accordance with the result of my own inquiries. "One of the Vartabads here [Uchkeliseh], introduced of his own accord the monophysitism of his church, by declaring that it receives only the first three of the general councils. Nestorius, he said, held to a perfect separation of the divinity and humanity of Christ, and Eutyches taught that his humanity is absorbed in his divinity. The Armenians, agreeing with neither, believe that the two natures are united in one, and anathematize all who hold to a different creed. In this he spoke advisedly, for it is well known that Eutyches is acknowledged by neither of the three monophysite sects—the Armenian, the Jacobite Syrian, and the Coptic, including the

* It would appear that the form of absolution in the Armenian Church has been changed from "God remits thy sins," to "I absolve thee from thy sins." Galanus thus writes, "Vera forma Sacramenti Pœnitentiæ seu Exomologensis, non est absolutio illa (ab Armenis olim Presbyteris usurpata, et a Vartano propugnata): *Deus remittit peccata tua*: sed hac alia (qua nunc communiter ipsi utuntur); *Ego absolvo te a peccatis.*" Vol. iii. p. 617.

Abyssinian, to which his controversy gave birth—and that his alleged dogma of a confusion in the natures of Christ is the reason of his rejection, though, perhaps, a candid investigation will hardly find him chargeable with such an opinion.* Another intelligent ecclesiastic had told us, that not only does his nation hold to one nature, but also to one will, in Christ—thus making the Armenians partake in the monothelite as well as the monophysite heresy.† The same priest, after declaring that Christ is perfect God and perfect man, and being asked, also, if the Divine nature was so united to the human as to suffer with it on the cross, replied that it is impossible for the Divinity to suffer; but in expressing this opinion, he seemed to contradict the formularies of his church in which the prayer occurs, 'Holy God, and holy strong, and holy immortal, *who was crucified for us*, have mercy upon us;' and with its belief that the Divinity of Christ cleaved to his body even in the grave, so as to render it incorruptible." Like the Greeks, the Armenians hold that the Spirit proceeds from the Father only. Practically, however, they dwell so little on their peculiar opinions respecting the Trinity, that Mr Smith finds himself warranted to say, that "missionaries may convert the whole nation to the truth as it is in Jesus, without feeling themselves once called upon to agitate the questions which, in the times of the first councils, rent the Church asunder."‡

* Assem. Bib. Orient. vol. 2, intro. dissert. Mosheim Eccles. Hist. vol. i.

† Compare Assem. Bibl. Orient. vol. iii. p. 607.

‡ Smith and Dwight's Researches in Armenia, pp. 419–421.—Connected with the matters here adverted to, the following accurate statement by Cotovicus, (Kootwyk) is worthy of notice. It is

The following extract of replies given by an Armenian bishop at Basrah to Dr Wolff, throws light on their ecclesiastical position and tenets. "What relation have the Armenians to the Coptic and Syrian Churches? *Ans.* The Armenians have the same faith and tenets as they have. *Q.* What persons are by them considered as heretics? *Ans.* Macedonius, Nestorius, Arius, and Pope Leo. *Q.* On what authority does the Armenian belief rest? *Ans.* The Bible and the three first Councils—1. Nicea; 2. Constantinople; 3. Ephesus. Every other Council is anathematized by the Armenian Church."

The views entertained by the Armenian church of the sacraments are much akin to those of the Greek church. It holds that they are seven in number, namely, baptism, confirmation, extreme unction, the communion, marriage, ordination, and penance. The four first of these are administered together, generally when the child is only eight days old.

Baptism, according to the rules of the Armenian church, should be administered by a threefold effusion of water by the hand of the priest, followed by a three-

well that it is in Latin. "In Christo in primis (uti et Jacobitæ) unam tantum naturam, unam voluntatem, unamque operationem constituunt; aiuntque Humanitatem abysso Divinitatis esse infusam, atque ita ex Divinitate et carne unum quid factum. Asserunt etiam corpus Christi subtile, et agile fuisse, non corruptibile, neque accidentibus subjectum. Credunt quidem Virginem Mariam Deum peperisse; negant tamen eam carnem ex ea sumpsisse; sed cœleste corpus et spirituale e cœlis secum attulisse, atque subtilitate sua et agilitate Virginis viscera penetrasse, corpusque ejus tanquam per canalem pertransisse, atque ita demum statuto a natura tempore editum fuisse: Hinc vero incorruptam eam tam ante quam post partum mansisse volent." *Itin. Hierosol. p.* 207. *Antverpiæ*, 1619.

fold immersion, emblematic of the Saviour's three days abode in the grave. The present mode of its administration corresponds with the direction of the ritual. "We were assured by more than one intelligent ecclesiastic," says Mr Smith, "that it is by pouring upon the head of the child sitting in the font, a handful of water in the name of the Father, another in the name of the Son, and a third in the name of the Holy Ghost, and then plunging the body three times, to signify that Christ was in the grave three days. That entire immersion, and the triple repetition, are not considered essential, however, is proved by the fact, that the baptism of even heretical sects, who only sprinkle once, is considered valid, and persons thus baptized are not required, as among the Greeks, to submit to the ordinance again, on entering the Armenian church."* A small colony of Armenians at Kábul applied to the chaplains attached to the British troops for the administration of the ordinance to their children. Three drops of the holy oil are put into the water of baptism before its use, as observed by an Armenian bishop to Dr Wolff.† Baptism, the Armenians view as destructive of original sin, and productive both of regeneration and adoption, and communicative of forgiveness. They pray for the literal descent of the Holy Spirit into the holy oil, which they mix with the water and into the water itself, so that it may receive what they, in common with the Greek church, call "the benediction of the Jordan." In the act of baptism, they commemorate "the mother of God and eternal Virgin Mary, St John the Baptist, and all the saints, along with the Lord." Their baptismal service, which is given at

* Smith and Dwight's Researches, p. 305.

† Wolff's Journal, vol. ii. p. 347.

length by Joseph Aloysius Assemanus, bears painful testimony to the degeneracy of their faith.* As I have myself witnessed, in the chapel of the nativity at Bethlehem, they administer mass, or the communion, in a very ceremonious and pompous manner, with the priests arrayed in gorgeous robes, the waving of incense-pots, washing of hands, bowings, prostrations, and salutations. They believe in the doctrine of absolute transubstantiation; and they worship the consecrated elements as the real body and blood of Christ. The efficacy which they attach to the mass may be learned from the following extract from one of their prayers:—"May this be for justification, propitiation and remission of sins, to all who draw near. Through it grant love, stability, and desired peace to the whole world; to the holy church, and all orthodox bishops, priests, and deacons; to kings, the world, princes, and people; to travellers and seamen; to those who are bound, in danger and in trouble, and to those who are fighting with barbarians. Through it also grant to the air mildness, to the fields fertility, and to them who are afflicted with diverse diseases, speedy relief. Through it give rest to all who are already asleep in Christ, first parents, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, bishops, elders, deacons, and all the members of the holy church. With them also visit us, we pray thee, O thou beneficent God."† The Armenians communicate by having a piece of the bread dipped in the wine.

Confirmation is always administered by the Armenians at the time of baptism. It is generally denominated by

* Codex Liturg. Eccles. Univers. Lib. sec. p. 194, et seq.

† Armenian missal, called Khorhurtadedr. Smith and Dwight's Researches, p. 288.

them *Meirún*, from the sacred oil which is used on the occasion of its administration.* This oil is applied to the forehead, and the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, hands, heart, back, and feet, by the parish priest and not by the bishop.† Extreme unction, as we have already hinted, is also administered at the time of baptism. The uncertainty of life is urged as the reason of this early administration. By some it is supposed that the rule has fallen pretty generally into disuse in the Armenian church.

Marriage may take place among the Armenians, according to their ecclesiastical rules, when the girl is ten and the boy fourteen years of age. Betrothments are frequently effected when the parties are of a much more tender age. The seclusion of females is to a great extent practised among them in their fatherland; but in foreign countries they catch the spirit of an advanced civilization, and restore woman to that position in society which she is fitted and designed to occupy by Him who gave her as a help meet to man.

The ordination of priests among the Armenians is conducted by the bishops, and of the bishops by the catholicos. They speak, however, of only two distinctive orders of the clergy properly so called, those of the priest and deacon.‡ Their principal prerequisites to ordination are the simple ability to read, and assent to the orthodox

* "Meirun is the holy oil which is used at confirmation, ordination, and various other ceremonies, and is one of the principal superstitions of the Armenians. Its sanctity is commonly believed to be miraculously attested by its being made to boil by the mere ceremony of consecration." Smith and Dwight's Researches, p. 299.

† Smith and Dwight, p. 306.

‡ Smith and Dwight, pp. 234, 330.

creed.* Should there be a revival of literature among them, we may receive from them very interesting details connected with the history of the Christian church in the eastern parts of the world. In the convent at Echmiádzin, they have a very large library, principally of manuscripts of very great antiquity.

* The following are the replies of an Armenian bishop to the queries of Dr Wolff on the subject of the ordination of priests.

"If an Armenian desires to become priest, what ceremonies, or forms, must he pass through?

"*Bishop.*—They examine him, whether he is a legitimate child; then whether he is clever and honest, and whether he can read; then they consult with the congregation, and then the young man is required to confess whether he has always been a moral man or not.

"How is he made priest?

"*Bishop.*—He is dressed in church cloth, then he kneels down near the church gate. The bishop prays over him, and gives him the key to open the door, saying, Thou must be ready to open the church. Then the candidate goes upon his knees in the church, and then he gives him a thing to sweep the church, saying, Thou must keep clean the church. Then the bishop prays over him, and then he goes some steps farther into the church, and a prayer-book is given to him, and the bishop prays again over him. Then the gospel is given to the candidate, then he advances a step farther in the church, and then a bottle of wine is given into his hands, and then he is Dpir, that is sub-deacon. Then they put on him a cloth over the shoulder, and give him a vessel with perfumery, then he makes one step farther, and a Testament is given him, and he becomes head-deacon, *i. e.* Sarkawak; when he becomes Sarkawak, he is no longer allowed to marry. After he is Sarkawak he kneels down and ascends three steps of the altar; the bishop prays and gives him the Testament and the priest's dress, and a cup; and after this the bishop anoints his forehead and both his hands; he then stands with both his hands folded together, whilst another priest performs mass, and then the bishop bows over him; when the service is over he reads four chapters of the Testament, and must remain forty days in a room near the church, and is neither allowed to see his wife nor family. At the end of this time he celebrates mass, and thus he is Kahanah, priest." Wolff's Journal, ii. p. 356.

The Armenian ritual appoints nine distinct seasons for daily worship, and contains the services for them, viz. "*midnight*, the hour of Christ's resurrection; the *dawn of day*, when he appeared to the two Marys at the sepulchre; *sunrise*, when he appeared to his disciples; *three o'clock* (reckoning from sunrise), when he was nailed to the cross; *six o'clock*, when the darkness over all the earth commenced; *nine o'clock*, when he gave up the ghost; *evening*, when he was taken from the cross and buried; *after the latter*, when he descended to hades to deliver the spirits in prison; and *on going to bed*. But never, except perhaps in the case of some ascetics, are religious services performed so often. All but the ninth are usually said at twice, viz. at matins and vespers, which are performed daily in every place that has a priest; the former commencing at the dawn of day, and embracing the first six services, and the latter commencing about an hour before sunset, and embracing the seventh and eighth. On the Sabbath, and on some of the principal holidays, instead of one, there are frequently two assemblies in the morning."* Mass is as distinct from these services as the communion service in the Church of England is distinct from morning prayer. It is generally performed daily. The Psalms of David, hymns, and anthems, occupy half of the services; but, being in prose, they are not sung but chanted. Most of the lessons are taken from the Bible; but a considerable number belong to the Apocrypha, and books of extravagant legends. The prayers are offered up in behalf of the dead, as well as of the living; and they are presented with the invocation of the Virgin Mary, John the Baptist, Sarp Stephen, and Sarp Gre-

* Smith and Dwight's Researches, p. 105.

gorius Lusavorich (St Gregory the Enlightener), and other saints, as well as of Him who is the only mediator between God and man. The mode of conducting divine worship among them is often very unlike what is to be expected, when that God, who is a Spirit, is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth. The prayers and readings are in the ancient Armenian language, which is little, if at all, understood by the common people; and they are generally read both rapidly and indistinctly. "In the enclosure before the altar," says one who has more frequently witnessed their devotions than myself, "will be two or three priests, surrounded by a crowd of boys from eight to twelve years old, *performing* prayers; some swinging a smoking censor, others, taper in hand, reading first from one book and then from another, and all changing places and positions according to rule. The monotonous, inarticulate sing-song of the youthful officiators, with voices often discordant, and stretched to their highest pitch, will grate upon your ear. ..... You will be surrounded by a barefooted congregation, [this is no matter of reproach, for the shoes are taken off for the same reason that our own hats are,] ..... uttering responses without order, and frequently prostrating themselves and kissing the ground, with a sign of the cross at every fall and rise. ..... Why so large a portion of the service has been suffered to pass into the hands of boys is exceedingly strange. They fill the four ecclesiastical grades below the sub-deacon, to which are attached the duties of clerks, or more commonly are substitutes for their occupants, having themselves no rank at all in the church. Of the first 158 pages of the Jamakírk, containing the whole of the midnight service, with all its variations for feasts and other special occasions, more

than 130, consisting of psalms, hymns, &c. are read or chanted by them under the direction of the priests.... Of the remaining pages, some half a dozen belong to the deacons, if there are any, and the remainder, consisting simply of prayers and lessons from the gospels, are read by the priests. All the service, with few other exceptions than the lessons, and that the priest in the middle of every prayer of any length turns round to wave a cross before the people, and say, 'Peace be to all, let us worship God,' is performed with the back to the congregation. ..... If a boy makes a mistake he is reproved, or even chastised, on the spot, though a prayer be interrupted for the purpose. The people, too, are constantly coming and going, or moving about, and often engaged in conversation."* This gross irreverence, it is but justice to say, is matter of regret with many of the intelligent Armenians with whom I have come in contact. The Sabbath, the Armenians regard with greater strictness, as far as rest is concerned, than most of the other bodies of eastern Christians; and few of the people altogether neglect attendance at church. This bespeaks on their part some becoming reverence for the divine institution. It would doubtless tend to its better sanctification, were they to curtail the numerous feast and fast days which they have devised of their own hearts. It is to be lamented that they too often substitute their attendance at church for family and private prayer.

To the worship of saints and angels by the Armenians I have already alluded. The material cross on which the Saviour died, they view as a real, though silent, intercessor. In imitation of it, they make artificial crosses

* Smith and Dwight, pp. 139–141.

for consecration by water, wine, and the holy oil; and to these crosses they direct their adorations, believing that Christ becomes inseparably united to them. They worship the pictures of Christ, setting forth that the Redeemer himself is inherent in them; and give inferior honour and reverence to the images of the saints and angels. The Armenian bishop of Cairo, when shewing us his church, seemed to be ashamed of their practice in these respects. "We have here," he said, "only a very few pictures, and these only for purposes of commemoration. But the fewer the better."

I have alluded to the standard of literary attainment among the Armenian clergy. The state of education among the people of Armenia proper, is in general exceedingly low, the schools being extremely few in number, and limited in the instruction which they communicate. Among some of the exterior parts in which Armenians are to be found, as we may afterwards have occasion to notice, education is advancing in a very encouraging manner. There are Armenian presses at Echmiádzin, Constantinople, Smyrna, Moscow, Astrakhan, and Tiflis; and they may be made the means of extensively diffusing useful and divine knowledge within their community. Many important works in the Armenian language, which obtain an extensive circulation, are published at the Catholic convent of St Lazarus near Venice; but it becomes the Armenians to be on their guard against their being ensnared by them to the embracement of the tenets and practices of Rome.

Without enlarging these details, it will be seen that the Armenian church has departed far indeed, in many respects, from the doctrine and discipline of Christ. It delights my heart, however, to say, that its ministers

and people are not so hopelessly involved in error as at first sight appears. They are not overborne by human authority, either that of their present ecclesiastics, or of the ancient fathers and councils of the church; and much as they defer to tradition, they allow that, in matters of faith and practice, the ultimate appeal must be made to the Holy Scriptures. Their ecclesiastical services are tolerated by some of them more from ignorance than approval of their contents. There is a pretty general persuasion amongst the more intelligent members of their community, that the primitive days of Christianity were distinguished for greater simplicity in the forms of worship and church-government than the present. They are not unmindful altogether of the stedfastness of their forefathers under the direful persecution of the Zoroastrians; and they are not ignorant of the fact, that love to the Saviour was the grand instrument of their support under the tribulation which they were called to endure. They cordially hate Popery, from the insidious inroads which it has striven to make in their own body; and they are better pleased with their disagreement than with their accordance with Rome.* Scattered though they be over a surface of

* Galanus, the Roman missionary, gives the following summary of the "errors of the Armenians" in the time of Bartholomæus, also an emissary of Rome, who died in the year 1333. "1. They assert that there is only one nature in Christ, according to the heresy of Dioscorus. 2. That the Holy Spirit proceeds not from the Son, according to the error of the Greeks. 3. That the souls of the saints do not enter the kingdom of heaven, and of sinners into hell, before the final judgment; but that they all wait that judgment in the middle of the firmament. 4. That there is no place of purgatory, or of hell. 5. That the Romish Church has not obtained the primacy

country immensely large, when compared with their numbers, they cherish no small share of commendable fraternal and patriotic feeling. They are, compared with others in the East, to a great extent free from bigotry. If they have not yet received the doctrines of the Reformation, it can scarcely be said that they have rejected them, like the Roman and Greek churches, for it is only lately that the attempt has been made to press them on their acceptance. Some of the prayers which are most popular in their body, are well nigh evangelical

over other churches. 6. They detest Pope Leo, and the Council of Chalcedon. 7. They do not observe the Dominical festivals, according to the order observed by the Romish Church, especially the nativity of our Lord. 8. They do not observe the fasts according to the ecclesiastical canons. 9. They have not all the seven sacraments of the church, omitting confirmation and extreme unction, and being ignorant of the essence of the other sacraments. 10. They do not pour water into the cup, when they celebrate the divine sacrifice of the mass. 11. They assert that the Eucharist is not to be dispensed to the people, unless under both kinds; and therefore they distribute the body of Christ first tinged with his sacred blood in the cup. 12. They celebrate it in cups made of wood or clay. 13. Any priest may absolve the penitent from any sin, without any reservation, even without any case of necessity. 14. They are subject to two patriarchs, each of whom claims the patriarchy of the whole of Armenia to himself. 15. The parochials and bishops are constituted by hereditary right, through the violence of their kindred. 16. They buy and sell the sacraments of the Church for a price. 17. They make a divorce without a cause between man and wife for the sake of money, contrary to the command of the gospels and the sacred canons. 18. They do not concoct (conficiunt) the oil of chrism, and of the sick. 19. They give the holy communion to children before the use of reason." *Concil. Eccles. Armen. cum Rom. vol. i. p.* 515. Some of these charges against the Armenians are without foundation; and for some of the grounds of their differing from Rome they have a scriptural warrant.

throughout.* Many of them, in the different countries of their dispersion, exercise a great influence over the

* The following occurs in a prayer-book, in the modern Armenian, composed by Petrus, Wartabed of Tiflis. The translation is by Dr Wolff. "Jesus Christ, my Lord, thou hast suffered for us sinners, who have been worthy of condemnation on account of our sins; and thou hast freely saved us without our merits; thanks be to thee. O Jesus, thou art sweet indeed, and the light of my eyes. Thy sufferings have been very bitter and grievous indeed which thou sufferedst with thy great condescension, and this for our sake. O how deeply do I feel that we have so heavily sinned that thou hadst to suffer for it. For we are nothing, we soon, very soon pass away; and thou hast voluntarily suffered for thy own good pleasure. I feel in myself nothing but sickness and sins; and for our sakes thou wert nailed on the cross; therefore, O Jesus Christ my Lord, as thou didst suffer all these great sufferings, I humbly beseech thee, that thou mayest inspire in me faith and an experimental knowledge of thy sufferings. This will be sufficient, and I desire nothing else in this world, only that I may acquire faith in thee, and love toward thee; and by which faith and love, thou mayest burn within my heart and in my soul. And grant to enable me always to think in my mind of those things which thou, O Lord, sufferedst; for if I have acquired such a faith in thee and love toward thee, then the wicked one will never be able to hurt me, nor consume me. Nor shall I ever be afraid of him, relying on, and supported by thy cross, so mighty and so powerful to destroy him. Thou art our Wartabed, our master in truth; and thou art the light of our heart. Thou art he that healeth our wounds, and thou takest away all our sores, and thou drivest away all our fears, and thou art the giver of tears, tears unto repentance; and thou enrichest us with thy loving-kindness. Lord, I am undone without thee. I am a dry tree, which giveth no fruit. O Jesus, good Jesus, I humbly beseech thee to hear me for the sake of thy sufferings." Wolff's Journal, vol. ii. p. 357.

A prayer of Nerses Clajensis of the twelfth century is a great favourite with the Armenians. An edition of it was some time ago printed at the monastery of St Lazarus in no fewer than twenty-four languages, embracing even the Chinese. It is divided into twenty-four sections, corresponding with the hours of the day. It contains many supplications, strictly evangelical, addressed to the

Muhammadans, and Jews, and heathen, among whom they dwell, and exercise their calling as merchants,

Father and Son, and presented in the name of the Saviour, whose *sole mediatorship*, however, it does not recognise, as it contains a direct reference in the conclusion to "the intercession of the holy mother of God, and John the Baptist, and the first martyr St Stephen, and St Gregory our illuminator, and the holy Apostles, Doctors, Martyrs, Patriarchs, Hermits, Virgins, and all thy saints in heaven and earth."

Should this lecture ever come into the hands of any Armenian, an admirer of this prayer, I would direct his attention to the following substance of a simple conversation which a friend and myself on one occasion had with a priest who approved of that invocation of the saints and angels which it exemplifies.

"*Protestants.*—You seem, friend, to be very unwell. What is the matter with you?

"*Priest.*—I fear that I am suffering from a consumption. I have tried a change of climate without effect, and now death seems to stare me in the face.

"*Prot.*—Your circumstances are very solemn. What do you do in the prospect of death and judgment?

"*Priest.*—I ask the saints and angels to recommend me to the Saviour's mercy.

"*Prot.*—Where are the saints?

"*Priest.*—They are in heaven.

"*Prot.*—But suppose them to be a great deal nearer to you than heaven. Suppose them to be on the other side of this plain of Balbek, seated on the summits of Mount Lebanon. Do you think that they could hear you, if you were to cry to them from this place? Do you think that they could lend an ear to hundreds and thousands of Christians calling upon them at Damascus, Jerusalem, Constantinople, and ten thousand other places throughout the world, at the same time? Do you think that they could separately represent the interests of all appealing to them to the Saviour?

"*Priest.*—I do not see how they could; but you have destroyed my peace, and taken away my hope.

"*Prot.*—Only that they may rest upon a sure foundation. Christ the Saviour is everywhere present, and he knows the thoughts of all, and, as God, can receive the prayers of all. He is the "only mediator between God and man."

bankers, shopkeepers, and agents; and the revival of evangelical religion among them would have a powerful influence in the conversion of the eastern nations to the faith of Jesus. This opinion is quite in accordance with that of the great Fabricius,* and of every friend of the propagation of our holy faith who has particularly considered their circumstances. "Next to the Jews," says Dr Claudius Buchanan, "the Armenians will form the most generally useful body of Christian missionaries. They are to be found in every principal city of Asia;

"*Priest.*—But will it not be the height of presumption for me a miserable sinner, to call upon *his* name?

"*Prot.*—You have a divine warrant expressly to pray in his name. 'Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.' O how little do men know of the grace of Christ, when they refuse to trust him, or to come into his presence without the favour of their fellow-creatures. Be content with him: 'We have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous.'"

* "Armenii longe lateque per Asiam commerciorum causa commeant, qui possent Religionis Christianæ propagationem promovere egregie, si illius successus æque quam ex mercatura lucrum cordi illis esset." *Lux Evangelii*, p. 651. (1731.) Before this time we find the traveller Cotovicus (Kootwyk) thus writing of the Armenians:—"Armenii per omnem fere orientem latissime sparsi, Syriæ, utriusque Armeniæ, Mesopotamiæ, Persidis, Carameniæ, necnon Egypti urbes passim inhabitant. Homines sunt acerrimo ingenio præditi, mercaturæ in primis dediti, atque omnium artium mechanicarum peritissimi, cæterisque in rebus vel maxime industrii, erga exteros supra modum humani, et benigni; sed et Mahommeteis omnibus grati, acceptiores saltem cæteris Orientis Christicolis: quamobrem plurimis apud barbaros gaudent immunitatibus, et privilegiis. Græcis vero in primis infensi, maximo jam dudum inter utramque gentem vigente odio, Latinis autem studiosiores, quod hos pariter a Græcis odio haberi noverint." *Itiner. Hieros.* p. 206. Antwerp. 1691.

they are the general merchants of the East, and are in a state of constant motion from Canton to Constantinople. Their general character is that of wealthy, industrious, and enterprising people."* The Rev. Henry Martyn, Dr Wolff, and other missionary travellers, have spoken strongly of the great hopefulness of their circumstances, compared with those of some of the other eastern churches.

Though little has hitherto been done for the revival of evangelical religion among the Armenians, they have not altogether been neglected. Nor has their own agency been quite overlooked in the great work of the enlightenment of the eastern world. The friends of the Bible and Missionary Societies in this country are familiar with the name of Mr Johannes Lassar, a member of their community, and a native of China, under whose guidance Dr Marshman in the first instance engaged in the study of the Chinese, and with whose assistance he rendered the Scriptures into that most difficult language. Mr Arratun, a man of piety and devotedness, is at present, as he has been for years, a most useful agent of the Baptist Missionary Society at Calcutta. Mr Johannes Avdall, an Armenian of the same place, is distinguished for his learning, and most zealous for the diffusion of knowledge throughout his nation. He is well acquainted with many eastern languages, and the whole range of Armenian authorship. He is the author of a translation into English of Father Chamich's History of Armenia, and of several minor pieces. Mesrop of Julfah, when in India, translated Bishop Heber's Palestine, into his native tongue. The late Mr Aganur found a place among the literati of Bombay, and his two

* Christian Researches, p. 242.

sons occupy a most respectable position in that city. Their friendship is highly valued by the members of our own mission there. To one of them, Mr Aviett, who has taken a great interest in my discussions with the Pársís, I have been indebted for a translation of that part of the work of Esnik, an Armenian writer of the fifth century, which refers to the tenets of the ancient Zoroastrians.* During my own residence in Bombay, five Armenians, who had been attending for some time the ministrations of our mission there, were brought under serious impressions; and, deeply alive to the errors of the Armenian church which we have already noticed, and afraid, lest continuing with it they should participate in its sins, they voluntarily asked from us, and received, admission into the communion of the Presbyterian church, being desirous, as they said, to avail themselves of its services, at least till an effectual reform should appear among their countrymen. Several Armenian youths have been educated in our institution; and one of them, a young man of promising piety returned to Julfah, near Isfahán, his native place, on my leaving India.

The first Protestant Mission which seriously directed its attention to the spiritual amelioration of the Armenians, was that of the Basle Evangelical Society, established in the Russian province of Georgia in the year 1824. That mission, though, in the first instance, it had particularly in view the conversion of the Muhammadans, did much, and with encouraging success, for the Armenians. Of its proceedings among them, the following is an interesting, and affecting, and instructive

* Appendix to "The Parsi Religion, as contained in the Zand-avasta," &c.

summary, extracted from a retrospect of the Mission drawn up at my request by my excellent friend the Rev. Mr Pfander, one of the missionaries, now in India. Its great interest will form an excuse for its introduction to your notice.

"The population of these provinces consists of Muhammadans and Armenians; the Muhammadans, who speak a dialect of the Turkish language, form about *two-thirds*, and the Armenians *one-third*, of the whole population. To labour among the former, and occasionally to go over to Persia to distribute the word of God and to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the benighted and deluded Persians, was the principal object of the mission. But as soon as the missionaries got more acquainted with the moral state of the Armenians, and found them, in the towns as well as in villages, sunk deeply into such a state of ignorance, that they had lost sight altogether of the grand and practical doctrines of the Gospel, and believed Christianity to consist merely in a few external rites, as fasting, making the cross, praying to the saints, and giving homage to their pictures, &c., the missionaries could no longer resist the impression, that it was their duty to attempt an amelioration of their deplorable state, by providing them with the means of getting better acquainted with the glorious and saving doctrines of the Gospel, as well as with their practical bearings. In this view, they were confirmed by the Armenians themselves, many of whom, including several of the clergy, entreated them not to overlook them altogether, but as Christian brethren to sympathise with their low religious state, and great lack of Christian knowledge, into which they had sunk by the oppression they suffered for several centuries from the Muhammadans, their former masters. They desired the missionaries to establish schools, not only for the Musalmans, but particularly for the instruction of their children. These circumstances induced the missionaries to lay the subject before their friends at home, together with a statement of the necessity of erecting schools for the Armenians, as well as of providing them with the necessary school-books, and with a number of scriptural tracts and religious books. This plan being approved by the home society, some of them devoted their time and strength to this work, and the others to labour amongst the Muhammadans.

"It must be remarked that the Armenians, in the course of time, have so much deviated from the old language, into which their pious and learned ancestors more than a thousand years ago translated

the whole Bible, in which all their numerous religious and literary books have been written, and church service is still now performed, that it is now only understood by those who learn and study it; and the common people, though they sometimes can read the gospel in the old language and hear it read in their churches every day, do not understand it. Before therefore the missionaries could do any thing, it was necessary, that the vernacular language should be well studied, and its orthography and grammar fixed, that the New Testament and useful tracts and school-books might be translated into it. But here the missionaries had to struggle with greater difficulties than they anticipated. The priests and the learned they found, with a few exceptions, greatly prejudiced against the idea of translating the Holy Gospel into such an unholy language as they believed their vernacular one to be, and viewed the attempt as an injurious innovation; and the language itself was divided into so many dialects, that it was very difficult to find out, which was the more common and the most proper for being reduced to writing, and introduced as the standard of good vernacular language. But through the Lord's gracious help, and merciful assistance, the missionaries were enabled to overcome all these difficulties, and succeeded in the course of some years, in translating, with the assistance of some able and pious Armenians, the New Testament, the Psalms, a number of evangelical tracts, and some religious books into this language, and to prepare and print the necessary school-books. The greatest part of these books have been printed at their own press at Shustri. About a thousand copies of the New Testament, which only lately left the press, together with about 40,000 tracts and school-books, have been distributed by them in the vernacular language amongst the Armenians in Georgia, and in the adjacent provinces of Persia and Turkey. Though the prejudice was at first very great against books in the vulgar tongue, yet it was soon overcome, and the people felt happily surprised to find that they could understand what they read, or was read to them, and began to value the great gain, and to anticipate the blessings which this innovation would, in time, bestow upon their nation. The New Testament was eagerly sought for, and bought in most instances, and the tracts were, where bigoted and ignorant priests did not oppose, gladly received. Besides this, a number of schools in several towns and villages were established, and some young Armenians educated for schoolmasters.

"The intercourse they had with them, when travelling among the Muhammadans preaching the gospel, has been in several instances the means of bringing their Armenian brethren to Christ. A remarkable instance of this kind was the conversion of a respectable

Armenian merchant at Bakur. When two of the missionaries visited this town in 1828, the first time, he no sooner heard of their arrival and the object for which they came, than he visited them, and expressed his joy and his readiness to introduce them to his Muhammadan friends. As he was fond of religious conversation with the Muhammadans, he desired the missionaries to teach him, how to speak with them about Christ, and to instruct him how to answer their objections. This they gladly did, but when they began to speak with him also about the salvation of his own soul, he said, he wanted now only to know how to convert the Musalmans; about his own soul they might leave him at peace. Yet as they were much interested in him, they felt it the more their duty to shew him the necessity, above all, of first seeking his own salvation and the kingdom of heaven. In this state they left him; but a few weeks after, when they returned to the town, they were happily surprised at finding them quite altered, and so anxious about his own salvation, that the whole desire of his heart was now to know how to become a partaker of all the merits and righteousness of Christ, and how to make sure his share in it. He now sat down with them for some hours every day to read the gospel and have it explained to him, and to mark out all the passages regarding our redemption through Christ. After two years, when they saw him again, they found him truly converted to the Lord, full of grace and unction, overflowing with love to his Saviour, and with a warm desire to glorify Him, and to bring by a holy walk and conversation Armenians and Muhammadans to the saving knowledge of Christ. They could not help marvelling at the work of grace, which was visible in him, and gave him gladly the right hand of brotherly fellowship in Christ. And till now he continues to walk worthy of the gospel of Christ, and to be a light and blessing to those around him. Like him in other places several Armenians have been brought to a concern about their own souls, when they heard and saw the missionaries inviting the Muhammadans around them to come and partake of the salvation of Christ? Others, again, became interested about the truth by reading the tracts and the New Testament printed and distributed by the missionaries, or by the instruction they had received in their schools. In short, the attention of a great body of the Armenians of Georgia has been by these means turned to the gospel; a concern about religion and a spirit of inquiry, quite unknown before, has been raised up, and religion has become again a subject of common conversation, whereas in former times religious conversation was believed to belong only to the learned and priests. Many begin now to see, that their church, as well as they themselves, in their life and practice, have gone far

astray from the gospel. In one town of Georgia, called Schamochy or Shamachy, a body of from twenty to fifty Armenians, have for several years met together on the Lord's day for reading the gospel and prayer. They and others, though they did not separate from their church, yet renounced her errors and testify openly against them, standing by the evangelical principle, that in matters of religion only what can be proved and established by the gospel is to be believed and regarded as binding, and nothing more. Several of these awakened Armenians, in the town mentioned and at other places, are truly converted to the Lord, and dear and faithful Christians; some of them have already gloriously entered into the joy of their Lord.

"It will be expected, that the great enemy of God would not remain an inactive looker on at this glorious work, which begun among the Armenians with so promising an aspect; and so it was. Though many of the Armenian priests, and even some of the higher clergy, expressed their satisfaction to the missionaries, and encouraged them to go on in their endeavours for the good of their nation, yet no sooner the fruit of their labours began to spring up, than the priesthood, fearing the light which was spreading, would at last make it no longer possible for them, to hide their ignorance and to conceal their evil doings; and that they would ultimately lose their influence and gain, which is founded on the ignorance of people and the errors of their church, became violent enemies of the missionaries, and used all their influence to persuade the people, not to read the books of the missionaries, nor send their children to their schools. The Patriarch of the Armenians who resides at Etschmiajin, went even so far, as to send about his emissaries against them, and to excommunicate those who kept a friendly intercourse with them, or sent their children to their schools. Two deacons who came to the missionaries to be instructed in theology, and who were by their means truly converted to the Lord, and greatly assisted them in their work, were taken away from them by force, on the ground of being the inmates of an Armenian monastery, and because they refused to return when the superior ordered them back. One of them died in faith on the road, and the other was, as there is every reason to believe, poisoned in the monastery, because they could not make him renounce his evangelical principles.

"In the first instance, this opposition having made some impression, frightened many, and interrupted for a little while the schools and labours of the missionaries; but the people soon recovered from their terror, and the missionaries could go on as before. But when the Armenian clergy found so many of their nation in favour of

missionaries and evangelical principles, and felt that their power would not be strong enough to prevent the progress of the gospel and to stop the labour of the missionaries, they applied for aid to the Russian Government. With a view to obtain it, they brought many false accusations against the missionaries before government, alleging that their real object was not the conversion of the Muhammadans, but to destroy the peace of their church, and to entice the Armenians over to the Lutheran confession, adding that they had already turned a great number of their flocks to the Lutherans; and begged government to protect their church against such unlawful inroads. As it was never the object of the missionaries to create dissensions and separations in the Armenian church, nor to bring her members over to the Lutheran, but merely to bring, through the blessing from on high, a new life into the dead body of the Armenian church, and consequently they actually dissuaded the converted Armenians from leaving their church, telling them, that according to their opinion, they should remain in her, as long as they were not expelled; therefore it was not difficult for the missionaries to prove the falsehood of those accusations, and to point out the real sources of them. Yet the Patriarch, joined by the members of the Synod, which is the highest ecclesiastical body in the Armenian church, continued to use all possible means to set the minds of those persons of influence against the missionaries, and to create suspicions of the sincerity of their object, and the usefulness of their labours. For some time their endeavours were in vain, as the minister of the interior at Petersburgh, under whose protection and inspection the missionaries stood, felt convinced of their sincerity, and was in favour of their labours; but when the Armenian clergy found the views of the present Governor General of Georgia unfavourable to Protestant missionary labour, they easily succeeded in inducing him to use all his influence, that their labours might be stopped altogether. This he did, and though several of those of high influence at the court at Petersburgh used their endeavours to overrule these evil machinations, yet at last the Governor succeeded in bringing the greater part of His Majesty's privy counsellors over to his views. Consequently, an order was passed, and brought before the Emperor, and signed by him and sent to the missionaries, September 1835, which prohibited them from every kind of missionary labour. It appeared from this order, that it was not so much on account of the accusations of the Patriarch of the Armenians, the falsehood of which must have been well known to government, that their labours were prohibited, but more because the Russian clergy declared, or were induced to

declare, that they wished to send their own missionaries to Georgia, and that therefore, there would be no need any longer for foreign ones, and secondly, that the government suspected, that as foreigners the missionaries might spread political principles opposed to those held by themselves. The missionaries thought it their duty, as a last attempt to preserve their labour, to send into the government at Petersburgh once more, a full and free representation of their labours, and of the principles on which they had acted, begging the minister of the Interior to lay it before His Majesty the Emperor; but as this was not done, and they said that, at least for the present, no alteration of the order could be expected, they abandoned their promising sphere of labour, adoring the mysterious ways of an all-wise Providence, which allowed the enemy to triumph over them, and apparently to destroy, what they have been building up during a ten years' period of labour.

"Though it may appear to the human, and unenlightened eye, as if their labour has been in vain, yet they are sure that it was not. That the Lord has blessed their endeavours, is clear from the statements mentioned above, and there is no doubt that a lasting blessing will flow from them. To give to a Christian nation the word of God in a language which the people can understand, to provide it with a number of religious books, which lead the mind to take a practical and right view of the doctrines of the gospel, and instrumentally to kindle the fire of a new spiritual life in Christ in a number of individuals of that nation, however small this number may be, and to excite in many others an interest to know and understand the truth, is, there can be no doubt, to originate a better and a new era for such a nation. Although the missionaries have now left their friends and brethren among the Armenians of Georgia to themselves, yet they feel assured that the Lord will carry on the work he has begun amongst them, and will make true, what one of their greatest enemies among the higher orders of the Armenian clergy uttered, who, when he was in Schamochy, whither he was gone to preach, and set the people against the missionaries, but finding that nobody would hear him, said in the anger of his perverted zeal: 'I see the Germans have kindled such a fire as will never be extinguished again.' The leaven is cast into the mass, and will in its time leaven it through. That the Lord is in our days preparing the Armenian Church, which he, for wise purposes, has kept for so many centuries in the midst of the Muhammadan nations, for a better religious state, this observation cannot escape any one, who is acquainted with the present state of the Armenians."

Before the breaking up of the German mission in Georgia, that province, as well as the other provinces under Russia and Turkey, in which the Armenians reside, was visited by the Rev. Messrs Smith and Dwight, who prosecuted their exertions among them with great judgment in behalf of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Permanent missionary stations have been formed, in consequence of their inquiries, by the body they represented, at Trebizond and Erzerum, in the Turkish dominions, where the good work of evangelical reformation is proceeding. The American missions in Syria, Asia Minor, and Constantinople, as they bear upon the Armenians, I shall briefly notice in connexion with my journey from India to this country.

When at Cairo, I visited the Armenian bishop, along with Mr Walne the English Consul; and was received by him with great kindness. He informed me that the Armenians in Egypt, now members of the Armenian church, to the exclusion of those who have become Papists, amount only to about 600 souls. He represented them as generally educated men, holding the most respectable situations, and dwelt much on the virtues of their head, Boghos Yusep, the prime minister and faithful servant of Muhammad Ali the Pasha, who was lately removed from this sublunary scene, regretting much that, owing to his absence in Alexandria, I should not have the pleasure of making his acquaintance. The bishop appeared one of the most intelligent orientals whom I have met, a most lively and cheerful person, and a professed foe of bigotry. "The differences among Christians," he remarked, "would be much lessened, if the Bible were viewed as the supreme authority. I myself am much of a Protestant." When he was shewing us his church and directing attention to

its pictures and other pieces of furniture, and when I remarked that we had neither images nor altars in Scotland; and that we administered the Lord's Supper seated in a social form around a table, he added, "So did Christ and his apostles."* He lamented his ignorance of the original languages of Scripture. I presented him with a copy of the New Testament in the modern Armenian language, and with a couple of tracts, all printed in Calcutta. The language of the former, he commended for its intelligibility. He shewed us his library, containing a few scores of volumes, from the Armenian presses at Echmiádzin, Venice, and Constantinople, and told us that he regularly received the Armenian newspaper entitled "The Dawn of Ararat," published at Smyrna, of which he had a few numbers beside him. In reply to my inquiries about the history of the Armenians in Egypt, he stated that, about 700 years ago, no fewer than 20,000 were introduced into the country as slaves, and that about a century later they were joined by considerable numbers of their countrymen. The descendants of these persons were gradually amalgamated with the Copts and Moslims. From the assumption of power by Muhammad Ali, the

* The Armenian church at Cairo is small, but a most respectable erection, and fitted up in a tasteful manner. Like the other ecclesiastical edifices of the people to whom it belongs, it is destitute of forms or chairs, but carpets and cushions are spread on the floor for the accommodation of the worshippers, when they may wish to seat themselves according to the custom of the Orientals. Several excellent chandeliers are suspended from the roof. It is well lighted from without, and is free from the gloom which characterizes most buildings, public and private, at Cairo. A candle is always kept burning near the altar, as a symbol of the illumination of the Holy Spirit, a sign not appointed for use by the New Testament, and which I have heard objected to by some Armenians themselves.

present Armenians date their immigration. A few of them, in the first instance, came as travelling merchants; and about twenty-five years ago they began to be joined by members of their families. At one time they were more numerous than they are at present, reckoning themselves about 2000. They have two churches in Cairo, one at Marminah near Old Cairo, and one at Alexandria. Besides themselves there is a small body of Roman Catholic Armenians in Egypt. The bishop introduced me to some of his clerical friends when I was with him; and in return for my visit, he waited upon me at my lodgings, bringing with him a letter which he wished me to carry to one of his young relatives at Constantinople, whom he asked me to take to Scotland for his education. Besides making the acquaintance of the bishop, I had the pleasure of meeting with Hekykian Bey, the most proficient of all the Egyptians sent by Muhammad Ali to Europe for their education. His shrewd master has marked his sense of his attainments by raising him to the rank of a noble, which he well deserves. He is a person of great ability; but his views of religion have been considerably affected by his residence in France.

The Armenians resident at Jerusalem, exclusive of the ecclesiastics, I found to be few in number. Having been recommended to the patriarch by the bishop of Cairo, I visited that dignitary at the Armenian convent, which is said to be the richest at Jerusalem, and which, judging from its appearance and extent, I should certainly say is the greatest establishment of the kind in the holy city,—a striking memorial of the devotion of the Armenians to Jerusalem as a place of pilgrimage, their liberality of contribution, and their influence, even though destitute of political power, with the Muhammadan go-

vernment, in the acquisition of property and privileges. The patriarch received me and my companions with great kindness; but though we remained with him for a considerable time, our conversation with him was rather limited, owing to the circuitous manner in which it was conducted. Arabic not being understood by his interpreter, we had to get our questions translated into Turkish, and from Turkish into Armenian, and *vice versa*, before we could get an answer to our inquiries. He appeared to be treated with the highest honour by those who approached him, and was addressed in terms similar to those bestowed on majesty in the West. He declared his friendliness to missionary efforts for the conversion of the Jews. He invited us to take up our abode with him during our residence in Jerusalem; but we were unable to accept his invitation. His secretary shewed us all his buildings; and when he pointed out the hall in which the monks take their meals together, he directed our attention to a large liturgical volume from which passages are usually read when they are engaged in eating. That intelligent priest seemed to regard the ruins of the "city of the Great King," which he shewed to us from the summits of the convent, with an interest and enthusiasm, exceeding any thing we had witnessed among either the Greek or Latin monks. We were sorry to observe the Armenian pilgrims in the gorgeous church of St James, and especially the women, doing reverence, by kissing, to all its distinct apartments and accessible objects, and prostrating themselves before its altars and pictures. Many of them had come from the most distant places that they might enjoy these imaginary privileges, and engage in these foolish and sinful ceremonies. The appearance of the church is much calculated to impose upon their senses.

Its walls are covered with cloth of rich embroidery; and the pulpits, altars, and other fixtures are set with tortoise-shell and mother-of-pearl. Ancient tradition is appealed to, to add to its sacredness. It is alleged that it, or a small adjoining convent, contains the stone with which the sepulchre of our Lord was closed. Beside the large convent and church now noticed, the Armenians have a small nunnery in its neighbourhood called Ez-zeituní, and another convent outside the city, but also on Mount Zion, which they allege to be the house of Caiaphas, and where with all gravity they point out the spot where Peter denied his master, and the cock crew, and where was the prison of our Lord! They have a chapel, or oratory, too, in the church of the Holy Sepulchre. It is sad indeed to think that they publicly participate with the Greeks in the fraud of the holy fire. Their priests allege that they view the fire as not really miraculous, but merely emblematical of the descent of the Holy Spirit. They do not, however, undeceive their people as to the actual nature of the transaction. For a few years, indeed, they stood aloof from the Greek imposition; but, owing to the clamour of the people, they scrupled not again to give it their direct countenance. The two excellent American missionaries at Jerusalem, Messrs Whiting and Lanneau, embrace every opportunity presented to them of aiding the circulation of the evangelical books and tracts prepared in the Armenian language by their brethren at Smyrna and Constantinople. The late Rev. Levi Parsons, the first Protestant missionary who entered Jerusalem,* with a view to permanent residence, was cordially received by the Armenians to whom he addressed

* On the 17th January 1821.

himself; and the missionaries to this day acknowledge the comparative kindness of the sons of Haik to whom they have access.

During my travels from Jerusalem to Beirut I was accompanied by several Armenians from Diarbeker. Not one of them was able to read. It appears that their countrymen in the quarter from which they come are very generally in a state of ignorance. At Damascus, I found the number of resident Armenians to be 190. The total number under the whole of that large páshálik, is under 3000.

The American Mission at Beirut, which was first established in the year 1823, had its first fruits, as far as the assumption of an evangelical profession is concerned, among the Armenians. An Armenian archbishop, and a bishop, and a priest, appeared to profit much by the instructions of Mr Goodell, while prosecuting his study of the Armeno-Turkish at Sidon. I am uncertain of the degree of satisfaction which they continued to give to the mission. Only few of their nation are within the influence of the mission at Beirut.

The Armenians at Smyrna have been frequently brought to notice by European travellers, who have given very contradictory accounts of the state of their community. Letters which I had brought with me from India gave me ready access to them; and I was much pleased to find their circumstances highly encouraging as far as the progress of education and social improvement, if not of religious inquiry, are concerned. Their numbers amount to about 4500 souls; and ample provision seems to be made for their general instruction. In the Mesrobian School,—in which the Armenian, ancient and modern Greek, Turkish, Italian, French, and English

languages, as well as Arithmetic, Geography, and Mathematics, are taught,—there are 300 boys prosecuting their studies. The Sarkisian female school,—in which the Armenian and French languages and the different kinds of female work are taught,—is attended by about 200 girls. An extensive hospital has been founded for the sick of the community. An educational society has been formed for the diffusion of a simple, moral, and economical education, in the different villages of Asia Minor in which Armenians reside. Two presses are constantly employed. At one of these a weekly newspaper, entitled "The Dawn of Ararat," is published. This periodical, which is read in various countries of the world, is edited by Mr Lucas Balthazar, a devoted philanthropist, and a true friend of his kindred according to the flesh. The American Mission, through its press, too, is multiplying excellent Christian works to the fullest extent of its means, for distribution in various parts of the Turkish empire; and the Rev. Mr Adger, and the Rev. Mr Riggs, zealous and able agents, are devoted to the work of the Lord among the Armenians. Mr Lewis, the excellent English chaplain, embraces opportunities also of doing them good.

The American Mission at Constantinople, which was founded in 1831 by Mr Goodell, whom we have already noticed in connexion with the mission in Syria, has from its very commencement proved a great blessing to the numerous and influential Armenians of that great city. It has been the means, by the schools which it has instituted, the books which it has prepared and distributed, and the oral announcement of the Gospel in public and private, of exciting much serious inquiry, and producing salutary religious impressions among not a few Armenians.

Of the success which it has experienced, and of its present wants, I think it my duty to take special notice, by laying before you the substance of two important letters which I have received from the missionaries since I had the pleasure of making their personal acquaintance.

"You have been amongst us," says the Rev. H. G. O. Dwight, "and have had some opportunity of judging from personal observation, of the extent and importance of the work of reform that is going on in the Armenian church. That this work is the effect of the special operations of the Holy Spirit, we have, what appears to us, the most satisfactory evidence. One circumstance in regard to it, is full of interest and promise, and that is, that, not only at the metropolis, but throughout the interior of the country also, wherever Armenians are found, there is also found a preparation of mind to renounce old errors, and to receive the truth in its simplicity and power. This is evidenced by the fact, that wherever missionaries have gone preaching the gospel, they have found among the Armenians an open ear, and in every place where continued efforts have been made, souls have been converted unto God; and even in many places where no missionary's voice had been heard, by means of the printed word, souls have been awakened, and some, we have every reason to believe, truly converted. I could relate many instances, in which individuals far in the interior of the country have had their minds opened through means of a tract or book from our press, that fell into their hands; and in some of these cases the awakening has extended from one to another, until a large number have been enlightened. In Nicomedia, for example, a tract (the Dairyman's Daughter) and the New Testament were left by a passing mission-

ary in the hands of an Armenian. A priest got hold of the books, and was led by the perusal of them to the conclusion that he never had known what true religion is. He began to open his mind to a brother priest in the same church. And they soon became thoroughly convinced of the truth of evangelical religion, and we hope truly regenerated by the Spirit of God. As a natural consequence, they laboured for the salvation of the people of their charge, and now there are a number of praying souls in Nicomedia, and they sometimes meet for prayer, amidst scoffs and threats, to the number of sixty or seventy souls. A similar work has been carried on at Aderbázár by very similar means. Indeed, wherever our books have gone we have reason to believe that some souls have been awakened. All this shews to us that the set time of the Lord to favour the Armenian people, has come. Similar labours have been performed among the Greeks, for a much longer period of time; but hitherto without any such result. We seem to be called upon by the special providence of God towards the Armenians, to arise and possess the whole land; and yet, with all these encouraging prospects, we find ourselves greatly straitened for want of the requisite means for prosecuting the work. We are particularly embarrassed in the printing department; and it is with the hope that you may be able to induce some of the good people of Scotland to come forward and aid us in this time of our pressing need, that I proceed to lay before you a few statements in reference to this portion of our labours here."*

* "We have already published between thirty and forty different books and tracts in the Armenian and Armeno-Turkish languages; all of which, with the exception of three or four school

"You will be glad," says the Rev. H. A. Homes, "of a word or two about the Armenians. The work is making gradual progress, and in a manner that we can definitely see it. We hear of new cases of awakening in different parts of the city, even if a long time passes before we can see the individuals themselves. There has been a new and interesting developement in the interest taken by the female portion of this community, from whom, owing to the Asiatic prejudices of society,

books, are decidedly religious and evangelical works. Among these are the whole Old and New Testaments in Armeno-Turkish, and the New Testament and book of Psalms in modern Armenian; and the whole Old Testament is now in the process of translation into the Armenian language. Twelve of our books are now out of print; and we have no means of reprinting them, and at the present rate of printing and distribution, our shelves must ere long be emptied, and we know not how they can be replenished. Besides the Old Testament already alluded to, the following works are in a state of preparation for the press, or are actually prepared, and yet we have no means of printing them. 1. An abridgement of D'Aubigné's History of the Reformation. 2. A Book of Prayer. 3. A Reference Testament. 4. An original Essay on the Character and Office of the Holy Spirit. 5. A Text of Scripture and Meditation for every day in the year. 6. Wayland's Moral Science. 7. Two or three Sermons. 8. Gallaudet on Natural Theology. 9. Abbot's Young Christian. 10. A volume of short Narrative Tracts. 11. On Reading the Sacred Scriptures. 12. Lives of the Prophets. The first seven of these are in the modern Armenian language, and the last five in the Armeno-Turkish. I may also state, that we published for four years, a monthly magazine in Armenian, which proved to be very useful, though we have been compelled to suspend it from want of funds. * * * I would state in closing this communication, that the number of Armenian and Armeno-Turkish books distributed last year from Constantinople alone, was nearly 12,000 copies; and it must be remembered that there are also four other missionary stations of our Board in Turkey, from which our books are also distributed. Many of these books are sold, and in fact the comparative amount of gratuitous distribution is becoming less every year.

we have been much separated.* In two or three cases, numbers have come on purpose to hear the gospel preached, and arrangements have been made at their own request to have regular preaching to them in two different places, and this in addition to the places already established for preaching to men. Our school† is filling up with *pious* young men, who will, we hope, hereafter be a blessing to their nation. An evangelical priest was lately cast into prison by the patriarch, on the charge of having preached infidelity in the interior, and was called upon to sign a paper retracting all his errors. He declared that he aimed to preach nothing but the truth as it is in Jesus, and that they might cut off his head as the Musalmáns had lately cut off the head of an Armenian, but that it would be useless to ask him to sign a paper, no more to preach what he believed to be true. We praise God that he was enabled to witness a good testimony, and as the reward thereof so soon to receive his liberty. We know of a dozen towns in Asia Minor where are to be found pious Armenians; and in many of these places they meet for the study of

* In the churches of the Armenians, as in the Jewish synagogues, the females are uniformly kept apart from the males, being generally crowded into a small receding gallery, or orchestra, separated by lattice-work from the body of the building.

† This is a boarding-school, principally for Armenian youth, at Babek, a small village on the European side of the Bosphorus. It is under the assiduous superintendence of one of the missionaries, the Rev. Mr Hamlin, formerly assistant to the celebrated Dr Payson. I had the pleasure of attending an examination of it during my visit to Constantinople, and witnessing the progress of the pupils both in sacred and secular knowledge. The relative of the Armenian Bishop of Cairo, whom he wished me to take to this country, is attending this school, where every attention is paid to his improvement.

the scriptures, which they take as their only rule of faith and practice. This is the Lord's doing and it is marvellous in our eyes." Those who seriously reflect on the degraded state of the Armenian church, will be most readily disposed to appreciate this great work of divine grace, and to seek to forward it by their contributions and their prayers.

When I was with the American missionaries at Constantinople, I promised to endeavour to procure in this country the means of printing a translation into the Armenian language of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism with the Scripture proofs, and of the excellent pamphlet on the Culture of the Mind of the late eminent physician and universal philanthropist Dr Abercrombie, provided they would kindly effect a translation of these small but important works. Both of them, I am happy to say, have been lately published, the latter at the sole expense of the author of the English original, who appeared to take the greatest interest in the work of the Christian enlightenment of the Armenians, when it was brought to his notice. I wish that we could give extensive assistance to our American brethren in their operations connected with the press, and that they could tell the Armenians that many Christians beside those of the *yeni-duniá*, or new world, feel a deep and growing interest in their spiritual welfare.

III. THE SYRIAN CHURCH.

The great body of the members of this church is now found in Mesopotamia, particularly in the neighbourhood of Mousul and Mardín, where their highest ecclesiastical functionary, the "patriarch of Antioch" as he

is denominated, at present resides.* In this part of the world, their population probably amounts to about 150,000 souls. In the páshálik of Aleppo, and chiefly in that city and in Antioch, they number probably about 2000 souls. In Damascus they have only a few families. There are very few, if any, of them to be found in Lebanon; and in the southern parts of the Holy Land, including Jerusalem, where they have a bishop and a monastic establishment, they probably do not exceed a hundred or two.† In the provinces of Malabar and Travankur in India, their numbers, by the persecutions and frauds of the Roman Catholics, have been considerably reduced. Those who remain independent of Rome, in a letter to their brethren of Mesopotamia, stated their numbers a few years ago at 11,972 families, having forty-five churches and a half. In the government census of Travankur of 1836, they are given at 118,382 souls, the Romo-Syrians being, in addition to this number, 56,184 souls.

* The patriarchs profess to trace their ecclesiastical descent from Peter the Apostle, "patriarch of Antioch." Besides their own name, they now take that of Ignatius, from that of the "third patriarch of Antioch." Dr Wolff gives a list of the patriarchs from the Syrian archives in the second volume of his Journal. This missionary met the Syrian patriarch at Damascus, at which place he was on a visit, in 1834. One of the bishops, on that occasion, said of the patriarch, "This is our Pope!" The patriarch replied, "We must not say we are of Paul or Apollos."

† Robinson and Smith (Biblical Researches, vol. iii. p. 461) say, "The number of the Jacobites (*Syrians*) in Syria is very small. A few families in Damascus and in Nebk, the village of Sudud [Zedad of Scripture], and a part of the village of Kuryetein, a small community in Hums, with a few scattered individuals in two or three neighbouring villages, a similar community in Hamah, and probably a smaller one in Aleppo, constitute nearly or quite the amount of the sect."

The Syrian Christians call themselves Jacobites. When interrogated as to the reason of their appropriation of this denomination, they generally allege that they are the descendants of Jacob or Israel; that they are the descendants of the earliest converts of the apostle James, and that they are the adherents of the monk Bardai,* Jacob Baradæus or Baradat, who died bishop of Orfa (Edessa) in Mesopotamia in the year 558, and who, during his active career, was so successful in reuniting the monophysite sects throughout the whole of the east.

The Syrian Christians use the Syriac language in their church services, even though with most of them it has become obsolete. They communicate very little instruction, and offer up almost no prayers, through the medium of Arabic, or any other language that may be vernacular to them in the parts of the world in which they sojourn.

The church authorities to which they look may be ascertained from the following passage which occurs in their liturgy for the mass:—"Again, we remember those of the saints who excelled in holiness, died, and were comforted; and who preserved, handed down, and taught us an apostolical and spotless faith. We openly acknowledge the three holy, pure, and Catholic Councils of Nice, Constantinople, and Ephesus, in which were our fathers, holy, exalted, and God-fearing Malpans. We remember holy James, the head of the Metrans,†

* This is the Arabic form of the name. In Syriac, it is *Fasselita*. "Bardai appellatus est quod ei amictus erat, e segminibus Albaradai seu dorsualium quæ jumentis insterni solent consutis."—Eutych. tom. ii. p. 147, in Renaudot. Liturg. Orient. Collect. tom. ii. p. 342.

† Metran literally means metropolitan. Among the eastern churches, however, it is used as synonymous with bishop.

and the first in Jerusalem, an apostle and martyr: Ignatius, Clemens, Dionysius,* Athanasius, Julius, Basil, Gregory, Dioscorus, Timothy, Philoxenus, Antonius, Evanius, and particularly our father Cyril, who was a lofty and true wall, and the professor who openly acknowledged the manhood of the Son of God. We remember our Patriarch Severus,† the crown of the Syrians, a skilful orator, a pillar and doctor of all the holy churches of God, and our holy father St James (Jacob Baradæus), the precursor of the true faith: holy Ephraim our master, St James,‡ St Barsumas, the head of the mourners, St Simeon the Stylite, the chosen St Abeia, and those who, either before or after them, left, handed down, or taught us a right and pure faith. May their prayers be our wall. Lord have mercy upon us!"§ This passage, which is pregnant with meaning to the student of ecclesiastical history, puts an end to the many conjectures which have been formed respecting the creed of the Syrian church. It is to be observed that it makes no mention of Eutyches himself, who is alleged to have maintained that "the divine nature of Christ had absorbed the human, and that consequently in him there was but one nature, viz. the divine;" while

* Dionysius the Great, bishop of Alexandria in the third century.

† Of Antioch.

‡ Of Nisibin? The Syrians have so many persons of this name, that it is difficult to identify the person here referred to.

§ MS. translation of the Syrian Mass-Book in the possession of the Rev. J. C. Thompson of Quilon. This document, translated, I believe, directly from the Syriac, I find to be fuller than the *Ordo Communis Liturgiæ secundum ritum Syrorum Jacobitarum*, in the Liturgiarum Orientalium Collectio of Renaudot. This author, however, gives in a note (tom. ii. p. 103) a longer list of Syrian doctors than that set forth in this commemoration.

it mentions with reverence some of the principal supporters of the allied sect of monophysites, who taught that "the divine and human nature of Christ were so united as to form only one nature; yet without any change, confusion, or mixture of the two natures." The name of Barsumas, the famous Nestorian, too, finds a place. Before its impregnation with monophysitism, the Syrian church was doubtless much under the influence of the followers of the ill-used and much misrepresented Nestorius, as well as extended by them, in the exercise of their most commendable missionary zeal, to India and other distant countries. The ministers of the Syrian church whom I have met in the east have generally expressed themselves in a manner not very inconsistent with orthodoxy. The union of the natures of Christ is so complete, they have said, that there is unity in these natures. The Godhead and manhood of Christ, however, being unchanged, there is still duality. To our explanation,—the unity is that of oneness of person, while the two nature sare still distinct,—they generally, in the end, have not objected. Except perhaps in the case of Eutyches, with whom the Syrians indignantly disclaim all connection, the Christian church was divided by little more than a logomachy respecting the nature of Christ in the fifth century.

The liturgical works of the Syrian church, as far as I have been able to inspect them, appear to present a considerable amount of evangelical doctrine and supplication addressed directly to the Saviour. They are far, however, from being free from the most dangerous errors. In fact, we can see in them most of the falsities which we have pointed out in connexion with the Armenian church, such as the worship of the saints, particularly "Holy

Mary, the Mother of God," and John the Baptist, the constant intercessors with the Saviour in behalf of those who call upon their names, and who make odoriferous incense ascend to their delectification, and the first of whom is addressed in the most blasphemous language ;* the doctrine of baptismal regeneration ;† the transubstantiation of the elements of bread and wine used in the Lord's Supper into the real body and blood of Christ, and the presenting them as a real sacrifice to God, both for

* Let the following suffice as an example :—"O beautiful virgin, the mother of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who by his saving manifestation removed from us the darkness of sin and the error of destruction, what tongue is sufficient to speak thy exaltation? We know that thou art the spring of life, the fountain of salvation, the blessed ground and ladder that leadeth to heaven. Therefore, O thou fleshly chariot, in which the Lord of angels dwelt, blessed art thou: O thou the burning bush in which the ark of the highest was seen, blessed art thou: We marvel at thee: O thou who art full of goodness, pray with us now to thy Son, who sprang from thee, that in his grace and mercy, he may blot out our sins and transgressions, and make us and our dead fit for the house in Jerusalem, and for Abraham's bosom." *Syrian Mass Liturgy.*

† In the second book of the Codex Liturgicus Ecclesiæ Universæ of Joseph Aloysius Assemanus, there are given three forms of baptism according to the ritual of the Syrians. In each of these the literal descent of the Holy Spirit into the waters of baptism is invoked; and the Holy Spirit is represented as regenerating the soul by the waters of baptism. According to these forms, the face of the child is to be turned toward the East in the Bapistry, and a triple affusion of water to be made with the left hand of the priest at the pronunciation of the name of each of the persons of the Trinity. The rubricks directing the celebration of the rite superadd, particularly in connection with the anointing of the body, a concomitant of baptism in the Syrian Church, various other unscriptural ceremonies to which the greatest importance is attached. *Tom. ii. pp.* 211, *et seq.* The rite of confirmation follows that of Baptism and Chrism, after the expiry of seven days. *Tom. iii. p.* 191.

the dead and living who profess the true faith ;* prayers for the dead, that they may be delivered from deprivations and chastisements rendered necessary by their imperfections and sins; and the exaltation of the priest to the work of Christ himself in forgiving sins and dispensing judgment. Connected with this latter subject, the following strange exhortation occurs in the mass-book :— " God has given to men two dominions; one to the king, the other to the priest. God has given the chief place on earth to the king, and the sure dominion over the living in the judgment to the priest. The Lord has not given power to the king to take the censer; the priest has no power to use the sword against the king. The king is the ruler to rule in civil affairs; the priest is the ruler to sanctify souls. The king has only power to kill the body; but the priest has power by his curses to destroy both soul and body. The prayer of him who is cursed is not received upon earth, and his supplications will not be accepted before God. He who is cursed has no right to enter into the church to receive the body and blood of the Son of God. He who is cursed is like a vine branch which being smitten by hail, and stripped of its beauty, is only fit to be consumed. He who is cursed is like an ear of corn blasted by a hot wind, which lies stript of its splendour amidst the standing corn. He who is cursed is like the day which the Lord cursed, and which cannot be reckoned amongst the number of the days of the year. He who is cursed is like a dried river that is the sport of rivers and seas." This undue ex-

* The Syrians use leavened bread in dispensing the Lord's Supper. The priest alone drinks of the cup; but he dips the cake, with the cross and sections corrresponding with the twelve apostles imprinted upon it, in the wine, before handing it to the people.

altation of God's minister seems to be common to Antichrist in all the forms which he assumes. The Syrians, like the Armenians, have a superstitious belief in the power of the material cross, and in the sign of the cross.

The fasts of the Syrians are numerous and rigid. One of the deacons at Kuselli said to Dr Wolff, "Our fast-days are to many a Syrian too strict; for seven months in the year we are neither allowed to eat meat, nor fish, nor eggs; we can eat nothing else but herbs. But the Catholics allow to eat meat, to use oil, to eat fishes, and with this many Syrians are pleased and turn Catholics." On this Dr Wolff observes, "It is indeed sorrowful to consider that on the one side the Syrians believe to conquer and gain heaven by eating nothing but *herbs* and *sour crout*, and on the other hand, that the Catholics are so cunning to get soldiers by giving to the Syrians Italian macaroni and roast beef."* Rome knows well how to bind and loose burdens upon the shoulders of the ignorant, to suit her own purposes. The monastic institution is of high repute among the Syrians as among all the orientals, who associate with it pre-eminent personal sanctity.

The first branch of the Syrian Church which was brought under the notice of our countrymen in later times, is that which is found among the mountains of Malayálim in India. It was visited by the devoted and ardent-minded Dr Claudius Buchanan in the year 1806, who published a striking, but in some particulars an inaccurate, account of it in his interesting Christian Researches. His attractive narrative induced the Church

* Wolff's Journal, vol. iii. p. 244.

of England Missionary Society to direct its attention to the people of whom it treats, and to form amongst them an extensive mission, occupying two or three stations, which has now for many years enjoyed the services of able and pious agents. The establishment of a college at Kottayám, for the instruction of candidates for the ministry in the Syrian church, and which, through the kind offices of Major-General Monro, the Resident of Travankur, now an influential elder of our own church, received a large endowment in land from the Rání of that country, formed a part of the plan of the missionaries. At first it was thought practicable to conduct their operations, so as to preserve the integrity and authority of the Syrian church; but experience has shewn the necessity of receiving parties disposed to leave its community for the enjoyment of a purer doctrine and discipline, into the English Church. The excellent missionaries of the London Missionary Society at Quilon have likewise to some extent sought the good of the Syrians.

Dr Wolff, in the course of his journeys, distributed many copies of the Scriptures among the Syrians of Mesopotamia. I am not aware that any regular provision has yet been made for reviving amongst them the power of evangelical religion by any of the British or American churches, though I believe something has been in contemplation in their behalf. Their own necessities, their great poverty and depression, their position in the very centre of the empire of Muhammadism, and the jeopardy in which they stand from the agents of Rome, should attract for them, without delay, our prayerful and practical beneficence.

IV. THE NESTORIAN CHURCH.

As far as original conversion to Christianity is concerned, this church is closely allied to that which we have now noticed. It is evidently a branch of the Syrian church, as is proved by its traditions and ecclesiastical language, which is the ancient Syriac, and by the language vernacular among its members, which is a dialect formed from this ancient Syriac, but somewhat intermixed with Persian, Kurdish, and Turkish. Its locality is the mountains of Kurdistán and the valley of Uramíah, intermediate between Persia and Turkey, and between the 36° and 39° of north latitude, and 43° and 46° of east longitude. The number of its adherents has been estimated by the American missionaries at about 140,000 souls, of whom fifty thousand are resident, in a state of independence, in the mountainous district of Tiárí, sixty thousand in the other mountainous districts, and from about thirty to forty thousand in the province of Uramíah.* Dr Wolff estimates them at a quarter of a million.

The designation Nestorian, as applied to a branch of the Church of Christ, is derived from Nestorius, a Syrian, bishop of Constantinople, who has been branded as a heretic, but who was probably sounder in the faith and more distinguished for piety than his assailants and persecutors. In refusing to give to the Virgin the epithet of Θεοτόκος, or "Mother of God," he did not act

* See a Residence of Eight Years in Persia among the Nestorian Christians, with Notices of the Muhammadans. By the Rev. Justin Perkins. Andover, 1843. This is a work well worthy of republication in this country.

otherwise than we ourselves should do at the present day. The charge that was brought against him at the third general council of Ephesus, A. D. 431, by which his tenets were condemned, that he taught that Christ has two distinct persons as well as two natures, he himself denied to the very last, as is proved by his letters, published by Joseph Simeon Assemanus.* The harsh treatment which he received from Cyril and his other opponents, who hurled their anathemas against him, and succeeded in effecting his banishment, awakened much sympathy in his behalf throughout the whole bounds of the Syrian church, and his ardour and abilities procured for him many followers. John, patriarch of Antioch, befriended his cause; but Barsumas was its greatest champion, and contributed perhaps more than Nestorius himself to give form to the doctrines which bore his name, and which fell short of the scripture doctrine of the union of the divine and human natures of Christ, only as they represent it as merely a union of will and affection. From the famous school of Nisibin, which Barsumas founded on his being appointed bishop of that See, there went forth the zealous missionaries who propagated Christianity in Persia, Arabia, Tartary, China, India, and other distant countries. The doctrines of Barsumas were dominant in the east till the monophysite controversy arose, and divided the Syrian church. While the Byzantine emperors persecuted the Nesto-

* Biblioth. Oriental. Clement. Vatican, tom. iii. p. 192. &c. In one of his letters to Cyril, he says, "I approve that you preach a distinction of natures, in respect to the divinity and humanity, and a conjunction of them in one person." To another bishop, he says, "Of the two natures, there is one authority, one virtue, one power, and one person, according to one dignity."

rians, they persuaded Firuz the Zoroastrian king of Persia, to give them a refuge. They were so numerous and influential at the close of the fifth century, that they appointed one of their number to the archbishopric of Seleucia, on its becoming vacant, who became the acknowledged head of the Christians of Persia, and of the Nestorians in the different countries of their Christian enterprize.* The Kurdistán Christians, of whom we are now treating, are the remains of these Christians, exclusive of those connected with Armenia, and those who have from time to time been brought within the pale of the Church of Rome. They themselves, it is to be borne in mind, dislike being called Nestorians, as the following extract from the journal of the Rev. Justin Perkins sufficiently shews:—"In conversation, Mar Johannan objected to my calling him and his people *Nestorians*. I asked him what I should call them, and he answered *Chaldeans*. I inquired whether the Catholic Nestorians are not called Chaldeans. He acknowledged

* Asseman (Biblioth. Orient. vol. iv.) gives very interesting details connected with the extension of the Nestorians. Of these the Rev. Eli Smith gives the following précis. "Besides occupying, almost to the exclusion of all other Christians, the region which forms the modern kingdom of Persia; they were, on the one side, numerous in Mesopotamia and Arabia, had their metropolitans in Syria and Cyprus, and a bishop even in the island of Socotra, at the mouth of the Red Sea; and on the other, the Syrian Christians of Malabar were Nestorians, and received their bishops from Seleucia. [This was in the first instance. They afterwards received them from the Jacobite patriarch of Antioch.] Nestorian churches existed in Transoxiana as far as Kashgar; in the distant regions of Mongolia, the great Khan of the Tartars held the rank of P[illegible] byter in the Nestorian Church; and, if we may [illegible] subsequently discovered by papal priests, N[illegible] planted churches in the heart of North[illegible] Dwight's Researches, pp. 364, 365.

that they are, but added, 'Shall a few Catholic converts from our people arrogate to themselves the name of the whole nation? And must we surrender up our name to them? *Nestorius* we do indeed respect, as one of our bishops; but our nation are under no particular obligation to be called by his name, and no reason exists why we should cease to be called Chaldeans.'"* The people usually call themselves Syriáni (Syrians), and less often Nazráni (Nazarenes).

A great deal of most valuable information is given concerning the Nestorians in the second and third volumes of the Journal of Dr Joseph Wolff, who was the first in late times to bring them to the notice of British and American Christians. He had several interviews with some of their members, and he received interesting notices of them from Major Monteith of the Madras Army, whom he met at Tabriz, where he had been for some time residing. "The great body of Nestorian christians," says this officer, "quitted the Greek and Roman empire under the reign of Justinian, and sought protection from Nausherwán, king of Persia,† who assigned them a residence at Oromea, Maroga, Salmás, and Bashgela. They formed four congregations, headed by four bishops, of whom Mar Shimaun was the principal, whose family has ever since maintained the sovereignty over these tribes. They originally amounted to fifty thousand families, and at one time exerted a very great influence in the empire of Persia.‡ At different

* Residence, p. 105.

† At present the Nestorian patriarch resides at Diz, a village in the Hakari district.

‡ I have represented them above, on the authority of Asseman, as first obtaining protection from *Firuz*, who preceded

times they have experienced a very severe persecution, and under the Muhammadan government have been driven from their original residences into their present impregnable abode in the mountains of Curdistan. From what observations I was able to make, the worship of the Nestorian Christians approaches the nearest to the original purity of Christianity of any church in the world. They are totally free from the idolatry of the Popish churches; neither images, saints, nor relics, are admitted to their worship. They even regard the apostles, though inspired, as not being objects of adoration."* The Rev. Messrs Smith and Dwight, who visited them in their exploratory tour, though they do not go so far in praise of them as this gentleman, still present a favourable view of them, as contrasted with the other oriental Christians; and so does Dr Grant, in his work, which is so well known both in this country and America. Mr Perkins, the father of the American mission sent to their aid, and who has had better opportunities of knowing their circumstances than any other

Nausherwan about a century. It was in the reign of Firuz that they most needed protection, as the persecution of the Nestorians was then most violent. It probably became a matter of policy with him and his successors to grant them countenance. Renaudot thus writes of them, on the authority of Cedrenes: "Sunt autem illi Syrorum veterum Christianorum reliquiæ, qui post damnatum in Ephesino Synodo Nestorium, pulsi legibus Romanis, et quodammodo proscripti, in Mesopotamiam se receperunt, quæ a Persarum regibus sæpius armis occupata, tutum exulibus asylum præbuit: præsertim cum Cosroes, quem vulgo Nuschiruanum vocant, illis faveret impensius; adeo ut ecclesiam Edessenam ipsis attribuerit ex qua ab Heraclio dejecti sunt: reliquos etiam Christianos ad eorum hæresin amplectandam cogerent, quantum in illo erat."—Dissertatio de Nestorian. Liturg. p 2.

* Wolff's Journal, vol. iii. pp. 193, 194,

individual, gives a most encouraging view of their tenets and observances. "The religious belief and practices of the Nestorians," he says, "are much more simple and scriptural than those of other oriental Christians. They have the deepest abhorrence of all image-worship, auricular confession, the doctrine of purgatory, and many other corrupt dogmas and practices of the Papal, Greek, and Armenian churches; while they cherish the highest reverence for the holy scriptures, and, in theory at least, exalt them far above all human traditions. Their doctrinal tenets, so far as I have learned them, are in general quite clearly expressed and correct. On the momentous subject of the Divinity of Christ, in relation to which the charge of heresy is so violently thrown upon them by the papal and other oriental sects, their belief is orthodox and scriptural. The Nestorians are very charitable towards other sects of nominal Christians, liberal in their views and feelings, and strongly desirous of improvement. The patriarch has repeatedly written to us expressing his joy and satisfaction at our being among his people, his gratitude for our efforts for their benefit, and his earnest prayers for our prosperity. And such has been the language, and, apparently, the feelings of all classes of his people. The four bishops of Uramiah and several of the most intelligent priests, are in our employ as assistants in our missionary labours. They are engaged in the instruction and superintendence of schools and sabbath schools; they preach the gospel, engage in translation, and render other important assistance. And the patriarch and his brothers have often pledged to us the same co-operation, whenever we should be enabled to extend our labours into the mountains. Indeed, the Nestorians may, with great propriety, be denominated

the *Protestants of Asia.*"* To this I must myself add, however, that if the Nestorian liturgies, translated by Renaudot,† be now in use among the Nestorians, they view the Lord's Supper as more that a commemorative and confirmative ordinance, as the presenting of a sacrificial offering to God, the bread and wine becoming the real body of Christ.

The Nestorians have nine ecclesiastical orders among their clergy; but two or three of them are at present little more than nominal. They are those of sub-deacon, reader, deacon, priest, archdeacon, bishop, metropolitan, catholicos, and patriarch. All below bishop are permitted at any time to marry, according to their pleasure. The word Bishop does not occur in the Syriac Testament, *Kashisha*, elder, being employed where it is used in the English translation; but Episcopa, transferred from the Greek, is the ecclesiastical title in common use. The wish of the people is generally understood and consulted in the appointment of a bishop; but his consecration depends on the patriarch. A candidate for the office, according to a strange custom, must abstain from the use of animal food except fish, eggs, and the productions of the dairy; and his mother must observe the same abstinence while she nurses him at the breast. The patriarch officially has only spiritual power, but, in point of fact, he exercises a great deal of secular influence among his people.

Mr Perkins, whose favourable account of the Nestorians I have just quoted, says, "The Nestorians are still

* Perkins's Residence, pp. 20, 21.

† Liturg. Orient. Coll. p. 566, et seq. tom. ii. The liturgies of the Nestorians are in the ancient Syriac, and understood only by the priests.

to a painful extent under the influence of human, and many childish traditions. They attach great importance to their periodical *fasts*, which are about as numerous as in the other eastern churches, often to the neglect of integrity and purity of heart, and even of external morality. As a people, they are deeply degraded in morals. The vice of lying is almost universal among both ecclesiastics and people. Intemperance is very prevalent. The Sabbath is, to a great extent, regarded as a holiday. And profaneness and some other vices are very common. Indeed, the mass of this people seem literally to have a name to live while they are dead."* It is on account of this degradation, and the want of that vigorous evangelical teaching and spiritual life in which it originates, that they have need of our help, so that the things which remain may be strengthened.

It is much to the credit of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, that it has founded a mission among this interesting people, with a branch in the district of Uramiah subject to Persia, and another among the independent mountaineers. By the translation of the Scriptures into the vulgar tongue, the composition of tracts, the institution of schools, and the preaching of the gospel, in all which endeavours it has enjoyed the co-operation of the native clergy, it has done much toward their spiritual improvement. The incursions of the Kurds into the hill districts, attended by the cruel massacre of some 4000 Nestorians, has done much to impede the good work which has been going on. Jesuit, and other Roman Catholic influence, and the evil suggestions of Russian agents, I am grieved to intimate, have procured an order from the Persian go-

* Residence among the Nestorians, pp. 21, 22.

vernment requiring the missionaries to leave Uramiah. They have gone to the court of the Shâh to endeavour to procure its reversal; and that God may grant them success must be our most fervent prayer. It will be sad indeed if our hopes of the revival of evangelical religion, among the small remnant who for centuries have been so signally preserved from the wiles of the Pope and the sword of the false prophet, be disappointed, and the glorious light which appeared to be about to gild the mountains of Kurdistán, and to spread over the adjoining regions, be extinguished. May the Lord himself disappoint our fears, and put a song of praise into our hearts.

The churches which we have now noticed belong to Asia. Those which remain for our consideration have their seat in Africa.

V. THE COPTIC CHURCH.

The Coptic Church is the Church of Egypt, emphatically so called.† It is supposed that the population attached to it amounts to from between a hundred and fifty to two hundred thousand souls.‡ About ten thousand of

* The Arabic word *Kubt*, or *Kibt*, or as it is most generally pronounced in Egypt, *Gubt* or *Gibt*, corresponding with our "Coptic," is easily recognised as formed from Αἴγυπτος, the ancient Greek name of Egypt, though some will have it, that it is derived from *Kupt* (Coptos), a town in Upper Egypt, to which many of the Christians retired during the persecution under several of the Roman emperors. Renaudot (in his Dissert. de Ling. Copt.) states satisfactory reasons for not deriving the name from the city of Koptus.

† "The Patriarch informed me that he calculated the number of Copts at about 150,000. This is too low an estimate." Dr Bowring's Report on Egypt and Candia, p. 8.

these reside in Cairo. In Upper Egypt they form a considerable portion of the village population; and they are numerous in the district called the Faium, the Pithom of scripture. When I had an interview with their visible head,—the patriarch of Alexandria as he is called, though resident at Cairo,—he reckoned the number of churches belonging to them at 500, but from other sources, I was given to understand that they amount only to about 150. Their regular convents are reduced to seven; two, those of St Anthony and St Paul, in the eastern desert near the Red Sea; four, including that of St Macarius, in the Natron valley; and one at Jebel Koskam in Upper Egypt. Besides these they have a number of secondary monasteries, into which, the priests being seculars, women are admitted as well as men.* From among the monks residing at one or other of these convents, the patriarch or Batrak, as he is denominated, is taken to occupy what is called the "chair of St Mark," the apostle of Egypt. The mode of his appointment is somewhat singular. "The bishops and principal priests when a patriarch is to be elected," says Mr Lane, "apply to the superior of the convent above mentioned (St Anthony), who names about eight or nine monks whom he considers qualified for the high office of head of the church: the names of these persons are written each upon a separate slip of paper, which pieces of paper are then rolled into the form of little balls, and put into a

* For an account of the Coptic convents, see Wilkinson's Modern Egypt and Thebes, vol. i. p. 386, &c. Their libraries were carefully examined, in 1842, by the Rev. Dr Tattam, who was permitted to purchase and bring to this country the most valuable of their MSS. Among them, it is hoped, will be found some curious and interesting documents.

drawer: a priest draws one without looking; and the person whose name is thus drawn is invested as patriarch. Formerly, a young child was employed to draw the lot, being supposed to be more under the direction of Heaven."* I am not altogether certain of the absolute accuracy of this account; but a statement to the effect of what follows, I received from the present Coptic patriarch himself. It is not from the bishops, but the monks, that the patriarch is selected. When the choice or lot falls upon any particular individual, the magnates of the church apply to the Páshá for a military detachment, in company with which a deputation repairs to the monastery, to demand the person of him who is indicated. In a spirit of becoming modesty he says, *nolo episcopari*. The sight of the soldiers, however, speedily removes his scruples, and he humbly agrees to accompany them to the capital, where he is anointed to office, without having been constituted a bishop. Below the Patriarch, are the Bishops titular and real, the Presbyters, who administer the mass to the people, but never preach, the Archdeacons, Deacons, Sub-Deacons, Lectors, Cantors, and Exorcists, who are mere boyish assistants of church ceremonies. The Copts do not seem to lay so much stress as the Roman Catholics and their imitators on apostolical succession, so far as the idea of the transfusion of grace, and communicating the power of transfusing grace, from man to man, is concerned. The sanctifying virtue, they think, principally rests in the *meirun*, or holy oil of unction, which they suppose preserves the properties imparted to it by the blessing of the apostle Mark, as a new stock is always added to the old before it is ex-

* Lane's Mod. Egypt, p. 341.

haunted.* In the Arabic history of the Coptic church, written by Táki-ed-Dín-el-Makrízí, which is believed to contain the approved annals of the Coptic church, and a copy of which I lately procured, it is said, that there were no bishops in Egypt till the time of the patriarch Demetrius, whose name occurs as the eleventh in the Coptic list.† Jerome informs us that the presbyters of Alexandria were accustomed to ordain their bishop.

With the early history of the church in Egypt, the Roman and Byzantine fathers make us sufficiently acquainted. The Egyptian Christians embraced the monophysite doctrines probably prior to those of Syria. It was through the influence of Dioscorus, the patriarch of Alexandria, that Eutyches escaped condemnation at the council assembled at Ephesus A. D. 449, by the Emperor Theodosius; and it was against Dioscorus, as well as Eutyches, that the fourth General Council, that of Chalcedon, called by Marcian in A. D. 457, declared when it set forth its belief, "that in Christ there are two distinct natures united in one person, and that without any change, mixture, or confusion." Though Dioscorus was ordered into banishment, he met with much sympathy and approbation in Egypt, where the partisans of his views ultimately proved more numerous and powerful than the Melchites, so called from their support of the Greek emperor, the patron of the council. Upon the

* "The Copts pretend to have the head and body of St Mark, in the monastery which bears his name at Alexandria; but Leo Africanus affirms that they were secretly carried away by the Venetians to their city. Sir Gardiner Wilkinson (Modern Egypt and Thebes, vol. i. p. 167.) waggishly remarks, that "from the known habits and natural history of relics, this might not present any difficulty to their being still there!"

† Makrizi, section 65.

death of the Emperor Marcian, they murdered Proterius whom he had appointed successor to Dioscorus, and substituted in his place Timotheus Ælurius, whose sentiments were congenial with those of the banished patriarch; and though occasionally they were obliged to submit to a Melchite patriarch on the occurrence of a vacancy, and were sadly distressed, they at length got matters settled according to their own wishes. The majority of the Christians of Egypt declared themselves "Jacobites," nearly as soon as Jacob Baradæus gave form to his sect.

Makrízí, the Arabic historian, whose name I have already mentioned, thus writes respecting the conquest of Egypt by the Musalmans. "Know that the whole of Egypt at the entrance of the Muhammadans was filled with Christians, who divided themselves into two parties, respectively distinguished by race and faith. One party consisted of the men who held the government, and who were all of the soldiery of the lord of Constantinople, the Greek emperor. Their rites and doctrines were those of the Melchites. The Greeks exceeded the number of 300,000. All the inhabitants of Egypt, who were called Copts, formed the other part. Their race was a mixed one, as amongst them Abyssinians, Nubians, Israelites, and others, could easily be discerned, all adherent to the Jacobite doctrine. Some of them were imperial scribes, merchants, and shopkeepers; some bishops, and others presbyters, and such as pertain to this order; and some husbandmen, labourers, and servants. It was the effect of discord which prevented them from forming marriages between themselves and the Melchites who held the government, and that it happened that they murdered one another.

Their number was about two millions."* In hatred to the Greeks, as this writer proceeds to inform us, the Copts willingly became subject to the Musalmans under A'mru ben Elás, the invader of the country A. D. 638, and even assisted him in overcoming the Greeks, which he finally did by the capture of Alexandria in 640. The tribute exacted of the Copts was two golden *dinars* for every person above sixteen years of age, with the exception of old men, women, and monks. At first they seemed greatly to relish their exchange of masters, even paying this price, rejoicing in the vengeance which their hate led them to view as executed in their own behalf.

Fearful has been the retribution with which the providence of God has visited the Copts, since they placed themselves under the power of the Musalmáns. Degradation and persecution have been their lot during the centuries which have intervened between that time and the present. Hence the great reduction of their numbers, in a country remarkable for its tendency to an increase of population, and the depression under which they have so long laboured. Their history, so far as it is interesting, is little else than a narrative of suffering—of suffering so great, and in general so little deserved, that Makrízí, himself a Musalmán, cannot record its details without writing as if his sympathy were wholly on their side.†

* Numb. 314–317.

† Renaudot in his History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria, and also in the first volume of his Collection of the Oriental Liturgies, frequently refers to Makrizi. The original Arabic of Makrizi, in so far as the Copts are concerned, was published at Sulzbach in 1828, with a Latin translation by Weber.

When I put the question to the Coptic patriarch, "What are the principal ecclesiastical authorities of the Coptic church after the Bible?" he answered, "The Sayings of the Fathers, the Liturgy of Basileus, the Liturgy of Gregorius, the Liturgy of Cyrillus, and the Apostolic Constitutions." The liturgies here mentioned as used in the churches, are in the Coptic language, which is not now spoken by a single native of Egypt. A translation of them is given by Renaudot in his Collection. They are merely communion offices, containing some prayers, which may be suitably addressed to the throne of grace, but bearing unequivocal evidence that the Copts, with all the other oriental Christians, believe that the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper are changed into the real body and blood of Christ, and presented by the priest as an oblation to God. A large fragment of the apostolical constitutions in the Ethiopic translation by Mr Pell Platt, was published in 1834 by the Oriental Translation Fund. A complete copy in Arabic, which I procured, I have brought with me to this country. Though it contains a good portion of unobjectionable matter, it contains also much that is erroneous and injurious. The false assumption of the name of the twelve apostles, and that of Paul the apostle of the Gentiles, stamps the commencement of it at least with decided imposture.

The Copts, like the other sects whom we have mentioned, have seven sacraments, namely, *Baptism*, which they generally administer to boys at the age of forty days, and to girls at the age of eighty days—unless they should previously be seized with dangerous illness, dipping the body three times in water, to which the sacred oil has been added, and over which the sign of the cross has been

made;* the *Eucharist*, which we have just noticed; *Confirmation*, which is effected with *meirun*, or the holy oil, immediately after baptism; *Confession*, which is followed by absolution, and sometimes by the prescription of penance; *Ordination*, *Matrimony*, and *Extreme Unction*, which is administered with prayer to the healthy after the commission of great sins, as well as to the sick and dying. Connected with these sacraments, they hold the erroneous sentiments which we condemn in the Roman and Greek churches. The Copts, I may here mention, practise the rite of circumcision, but, as the patriarch told me, more as a civil than a religious custom. This they do privately, without any fixed age for its performance. Their religious fasts are numerous and severe. The patriarch exhibits himself as the great exemplar of religious austerity. It is said that he is awaked from his sleep every quarter of an hour during the night, that he may call on the name of God.

During my visit to Cairo, I once attended public worship at the Coptic church. It commenced as soon as it was light on the Lord's-day morning; and it was well attended both by young and old, who, on account of the smallness of the church—the largest, however, belonging to the Copts of the place—were much crowded together, to their great discomfort, increased by the want of ventilation, and the burning of numerous candles. The construction of the church much resembled a Jewish synagogue. It was divided into four compartments. The *heikel*, or chancel, forms the chief compartment at the eastern end; and it is separated from the rest of the church by wooden panel-work. Before it is suspended a

* The Coptic form of baptism is given by J. A. Asseman, in his Codex Liturgicus, lib. ii. p. 150, et seq.

curtain with a large cross worked upon it, having a door in the centre as an entrance. The compartment adjoining to this, separated by a fence of lattice-work from the other parts of the church, was occupied by the officiating priests and their assistants, by the patriarch who was sitting on an antique seat called the chair of St Mark, and by the more respectable portions of the congregation. Into this compartment we were allowed to enter. The inferior members of the congregation occupied the next apartment; and the most remote was appropriated to the women, who were nearly completely screened from our view by another partition of lattice-work. I observed no images; but a few glaring pictures were here and there suspended from the walls. The worshipper, on entering the church, laid aside his shoes, but agreeably to the universal custom of the eastern churches, kept on his turban.* His first act of devotion was that of prostrating himself before the chancel immediately in front of the suspended cross, kissing the hem of the curtain, and then before the patriarch, who extended to him his blessing on his rising, and lastly before some of the pictures of the saints. The entrance of great numbers after the service had begun, who went through these ceremonies, added much to the confusion, which was now and

* The text, "Every man praying or prophesying having his head *covered*, dishonoureth his head," the Orientals, perhaps not without reason, interpret as if to be rendered, "Every man praying or prophesying having his head *enwrapped* [like a woman's] dishonoureth his head." We have found that the converts in India even strongly object to lay aside their turbans during public worship, alleging that *decency* requires them to wear them. The Jews, it is well known, preserve their head-dress in their synagogues. "But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God."

then increased by the tinkling of bells and cymbals, and some of the priests moving up and down and waving censers with incense rising from them, and making demands on the patriarch for a new supply of combustibles when their stock was exhausted. Many of the older men were leaning on crutches, about four or five feet high, during most of the time of the service, evidently obtaining some relief from the use of them, in the lack of all pews, during the three or four lengthened hours of their meeting. They were frequently talking to one another and exchanging jokes. Some of the priests were hunting after the boys, who were seeking their amusement, evidently anxious to improve their behaviour in our presence. Their prayers were almost all in the dead Coptic, and, of course, were perfectly unintelligible by the people, who seemed to take little interest in them, though, led by others, they gave the responses. The reading of the gospels and epistles was in Arabic; but it was performed in a most irreverent and unimpressive manner by mere boys, who seemed to be highly amused with their occupation. The bread and wine used in the Lord's Supper were particularly inspected by the patriarch and priests before their consecration. The bread was in the form of small round cakes, with the figure of the cross, I believe, stamped upon them; and the wine was contained in a small glass vessel. The bread was dipped in the wine before it was given to the people, only a small portion of whom partook of it; and the priests alone drunk of the cup. The patriarch concluded the service by reading some exhortations in Arabic, and pronouncing benedictions. Except in so far as his part of the business was concerned, the whole seemed rather a mockery of sacred things, than the worship of the omnipresent and omni-

scient God. I trust that, in making this unvarnished statement, I speak to your deep commiseration of those who, like yourselves, bear the Christian name, but who treat it with such palpable dishonour.

The state of the Coptic and other Eastern churches in Egypt—we must be grateful in the view of their degradation and destitution—has not been altogether overlooked by evangelical protestants. The Rev. Joseph Jowett, the representative of the Church Missionary Society in the Mediterranean, the Rev. Pliny Fisk of America, and Dr Joseph Wolff, during their visits to the country within the last twenty-five years, noted their peculiar circumstances, and commended them in their published journals to the benevolence of those who are able to extend to them relief.* Five Lutheran ministers, who had been all destined for Abyssinia at the close of 1825, were brought into connection with Egypt; and two of them, Messrs Lieder and Krusé, were eventually settled at Cairo, which, since that time, they have made the head-quarters of their mission, and where they have faithfully and diligently laboured to diffuse Christian education among the Copts, to promote among them the circulation of the Scriptures and religious books and tracts, and, by conversation and exhortation, to revive among them the spirit of true godliness. The acquaintance of Mr Lieder I had the pleasure of making during my late visit to Egypt, Mr Krusé being then absent; and I was glad to be informed by him, as well as to learn from my own personal observation, that matters during his residence in the country have begun much to improve. By his kind and judicious conduct, as well as by

* Jowett's Researches in the Mediterranean. Wolff's Journal. Memoir of Pliny Fisk.

the visible benefits conferred on the Coptic community through the educational efforts of the mission, he has completely gained the regard and esteem of the Coptic patriarch, and many of the clergy, and great numbers of the people, and thus opened up a great, and what I trust will prove an effectual, door of usefulness. He has under his charge an elementary school, taught on the Lancasterian system, containing about a hundred boys, and a seminary containing about twenty-five youths receiving a higher education, and which, when I saw him, he was about to re-organize, with reduced numbers, however, as a theological school, from which the patriarch had promised to select candidates for the Coptic church. Mrs Lieder, whose literary attainments and application in the work of oriental teaching are so well known, had a female school under her charge, with an average attendance of about 120 pupils, and taught by a Syrian lady, Om Sulimán. A spirit of serious inquiry had begun to appear among a few of the Copts, but no decided movement had occurred. The embracement of evangelical views by any number of individuals would probably lead either to their abandonment of the Coptic church, or to their expulsion from its pale. Their consciences would undoubtedly shrink from the practice of the worship of saints, and their pictures, and the adoration of the mass, and other idolatrous and antichristian usages; and toleration would scarcely be extended to them in their dissent. This matter, however, is for the present hid with God. Let his true followers publish the truths of his salvation, and trust in that protection which he will extend to believers, and in his ultimately overruling that opposition with which they may be assailed to his own glory and their eternal good. The apprehension of in-

conveniences, trials, and changes, has too long deterred us from our duty.

A revival of evangelical religion among the Copts would undoubtedly render them a blessing in the midst of the land of Egypt. In the minds of the Musalmán population, however much they may be despised as Christians, they are associated with claims to a higher antiquity as a race inhabiting the country, than that of those who are now their masters, whether Turks or Arabs. Muhammad Ali, the present ruler of Egypt, clearly discerns the use to which they may be turned, connected with the state; and he has given to large numbers of them employment in the public service. Dr Bowring, in his official report addressed to Lord Palmerston, presented to both Houses of Parliament in 1840, justly says, "The influence of the Copts is undoubtedly an increasing influence, and they will probably occupy no small part of the field in the future history of Egypt. Theirs have been centuries of cruel sufferings, persecutions, and humiliations. In the eyes of the Turks, they have always been the Pariahs of the Egyptian people; yet they are an amiable, pacific, and intelligent race, whose worst vices have grown out of their seeking shelter from wrong and robbery. A certain sympathy, perhaps the result of common sufferings, exists between the Copts and the Arabs. They are the surveyors, the scribes, the arithmeticians, the measurers, the clerks; in a word, the learned men of the land. They are to the counting-house and the pen, what the fellah is to the field and the plough. . . In the manufactories of the Pasha, many of the Copts are employed as hand-loom weavers. . . A great many of them are em-

ployed in public-offices."* They are nearly ten times more numerous than the Turks in Egypt, who are reckoned at 20,000; and, except in so far as the army is concerned, from which they are excluded, they are beginning to occupy the situations formerly held by Turks. An evangelical reformation amongst them would increase as well as sanctify their influence.

VI. THE ABYSSINIAN CHURCH.

The adherents of this church occupy the whole of the country marked in our maps as Abyssinia, with the exception of its outer parts on all sides, which are now occupied by Heathen and Muhammadan tribes, which, till lately, were fast contracting its limits. Beyond the bounds of Habesh, on both sides of the river Gochob, it appears, from credible reports communicated to Sir William Harris during his late embassy to the country, "there exist in various quarters, isolated communities professing the Christianity of Æthiopia, who for a long period of years have successfully held their position among the mountain fastnesses in the very heart of the now Pagan and Muhammadan country." Of these I would here glean a few notices, as the most important and interesting accessions to the geography of Christendom which have been made in our day. For the sake of precision, I give them in the words of Major Harris himself. "One of the most remarkable of these seats is in the lake Zuái." Its five islands "are covered with lofty trees, and contain upwards of three thousand Christian houses." "In Gurágué the population are almost exclusively Christian. Twelve isolated churches, previous-

* Bowring's Report on Egypt, pp. 8, 9.

ly unheard of, were discovered a few years since on the conquest of Yeya, by Sáhela Selassie [king of Shoa in Abyssinia]; and between Garro and Metcha, where forest commences in the south of Shoa, is a small tract peopled by Christians, who reside entirely in caves among the mountains, as a measure of security against the heathen, by whom they are compassed in on every side." "Eight days' journey from Aimellele, on the frontier of Gurágué, is Cambát, a small mountainous province, lying due east of Zingero. With exception of a few Muhammadan rovers, this independent state is inhabited solely by Christians." "Wollámo is another Christian province under an independent sovereign, lying below Cambát, to the south-eastward of Zingero." "Eight days' journey beyond Zingero is the country of Mager, the king of which, by name Degaio, is represented to be a very powerful monarch. Korchási, which is famous for the great river Wábí, is peopled by Christians, as is Sidama also, and both are surrounded on all sides by the heathen." "But of all the isolated remnants of the ancient Æthiopic empire to the south of Abyssinia, Susa would appear to be the most important and the most powerful. This kingdom is situated beyond Caffa, and extends to the head of the Gitché, which rises in Chara-Nara, and is one of the principal sources of the Gochob. .....The language spoken is quite distinct from that of the Galla, from the Amharic, and from the ancient Gíz or Æthiopic. It possesses a written character." These intimations are not less delightful than startling from their entire novelty. They would appear to rest upon good authority. "Making due allowance," says Major Harris, "for the superstition and geographical ignorance of the various natives from whom the foregoing particu-

lars have been collected, the fullest credit may be accorded,—minute cross-examinations of individuals, who could have held no previous communication with each other, having corroborated every point." "It is important," he adds, "to know that the Gochob, in its upper course, is occupied by so powerful a Christian people, whose sovereign exercises over the destinies of the surrounding Gentiles, an influence which, if properly directed, could be made to check the rapid spread of Islamism, instead of fostering the traffic in human beings."* Where is the enterprising Christian traveller who will personally visit these remote localities in the interior of Africa; and where is the missionary of the cross who will descant to their inhabitants on the love and grace of Him whose name they bear, till, moved by his own Spirit, they in very deed lay hold of His righteousness, and be born again in the image of His own holiness?

The earliest authentic notices which we have of the conversion of Æthiopia to Christianity, are connected with a visit made to the country about the year 327 of our era, by Meropius, a merchant of Tyre, and his nephews Frumentius and Ædesius. When, after exploring the country, and having set sail on their return, they were forced by a disaster at sea to re-enter one of its ports, the uncle was murdered, and the youths sent into captivity. They were carried to court, where one of them, Frumentius, was appointed to the office of secretary. The sovereign, before his death, gave them their liberty; but the queen-regent prevailed on them to remain in the country during the minority of her son. They embraced the opportunities presented to them of

* Harris's Highlands of Æthiopia, vol. iii. pp. 74–83.

commending the religion of Jesus to those around them; and they were blessed in their labours. When they did leave the country on the king becoming of age, Frumentius communicated to Athanasius, the patriarch of Alexandria, the success which he experienced; and by this father he was ordained a bishop to the Æthiopians, among whom he afterwards experienced such success, that the king and the great body of the people embraced the Christian faith.* It was at Axum that this sovereign resided, as appears from a letter of Constantius the emperor,—who wished to bring him within the pale of Arianism,—quoted by Athanasius, clearly shews.† Frumentius is commemorated by the Abyssinians till the present time. He occupies a place in their calendar of saints, under the name of Salama.

To other notices of the early history of the Abyssinian Church I cannot here advert.‡ The connection which it formed with Egypt through Athanasius has remained to this day; its Abuná, or chief ecclesiastic, being still appointed by the patriarch of the Coptic Church, of which it reckons itself a branch, and which it imitates both in doctrine and discipline,—far outstripping it, however, in the multiplicity of its absurd legends, vain and superstitious ceremonies, and its idolatrous worship of

* Socrates, lib. i. cap. 19. Sozomen, lib. ii. cap 24. Theodoritus, lib. i. cap. 23. The country mentioned in these passages as the scene of the labours of Frumentius is called "India." I formerly thought that it referred to Hindustan (Second Exposure of Hinduism, p. 145); but I am now convinced from the mention of Axum (which is in Abyssinia) in the letter of Constantius referred to below, that "India," was indefinitely used as correspondent with Æthiopia.

† Athanasii Apologet. ad Imp. Constant.

‡ For the most important of these see Geddes's Church History of Æthiopia.

saints and angels. How far it has strained its inventive faculties in the exercise of will-worship, appears from its giving Pontius Pilate and his wife Procla a place in the calendar of its saints, under the 19th of June,—the former, because he washed his hands before condemning our Lord, and the latter, because she said, Meddle not with that just person. The clergy are remarkable for their ignorance, and no check seems to exist as to the assumption of the ministerial office. "The ordination of priests," says Mr Gobat, "is easily performed. It is sufficient for a man to know the letters of his alphabet, with a few prayers, and to give two pieces of salt to the interpreter of the Abuna or Coptic bishop, after which he receives the imposition of hands, without examination or exhortation; and this is the reason why those who are better instructed would be ashamed to be made priests. There are exceptions; but I am speaking of the generality."* The religious instruction of the people is not to be expected in these circumstances; and its twelve thousand clergy are nothing but "twelve thousand clerical drones."† Public worship, as conducted by them, seems neither designed to honour God nor benefit man. "Capering and beating the ground with their feet, the priests stretch out their crutches toward each other with frantic gesticulations, whilst the clash of the timbrel, the sound of the drum, and the howling of harsh voices, complete a most strange form of devotion. The lessons are taken partly from the Scriptures, partly from the miracles of the Holy Virgin and of Tekla Haimanot,‡ the

* Gobat's Abyssinia. p. 349.

† Harris's Æthiopia, vol. iii. p. 131.

‡ Tekla Haimanot is the favourite saint of Abyssinia. "Tekla Haymanot lived in the seventh century and was the apostle around Shoa. Tekla Haymanot means *Planter of the Faith*; his original

life of St George, and other foolish and fabulous works; but all are in the ancient Æthiopic tongue, which to the congregation is a dead letter."* The books found in the country beside the Scriptures are 108 in number. Copies of all of them have been taken to Germany by my friend Dr Roth, the naturalist of the British embassy, and deposited in the Protestant College of Erlangen. They consist principally of legendary lives of the saints, monks, and other personages; of abridgments of scripture history, sadly corrupted by absurd traditions and extravagant inventions; of collections of hymns and prayers, some of which are intended to frighten evil spirits; and of ecclesiastical canons and summaries of doctrine. Taking them as a whole, they are more fitted to mislead than to edify, to nurse superstition, than to beget a right faith and cherish a right devotion. A few of them, perhaps, are worthy of examination, as contributing in some degree to throw light on the religious history of Æthiopia.†

Many of the customs of the Abyssinians,—such as the practice of circumcision on the eighth day, abstinence from the unclean animals, the observance of the last day of the week as a day of rest (in addition to the Lord's

name was *Fesahat Zion*, i. e. *Joy of Zion*. He was born in Shoa. He replaced the royal family upon the throne, and was zealous in converting the Galas to Christianity. He even made such an impression on the Devil by preaching, that he (the Devil) determined to become a monk for forty years. ..... The same Tekla Haymanot stood forty years upon one place praying, until he broke his leg. There are twenty-four elders around the throne of God with censers in their hands, serving God, and Tekla Haymanot is the twenty-fifth. He had six wings like angels." Wolff's Journal, vol. v. p. 350. This is a fair specimen of the legends of Abyssinia.

* Harris's Æthiopia, vol. iii. pp. 136, 137.

† See a catalogue of these works in the appendix to the third volume of the Highlands of Æthiopia, by Sir William Harris.

day), religious purifications, the wearing of a ribband of blue as a symbol of their faith, the construction of their churches in the form of synagogues, the performance of worship with the musical instruments mentioned in the Psalms, abstinence from the sinew that shrank and from blood, the practice of confession on the day of the atonement, and the offering of a kind of atoning sacrifice called Boza,—have evidently had a Jewish origin; and there consequently can be little doubt, that the nation was considerably affected by Jewish manners and customs before its conversion to Christianity. I think it probable that the Jews, in some numbers, extended themselves from Egypt and Yemen to the country before the Christian era. It is a matter of certainty, that many Jews repaired to it both after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, and on the persecution raised by Adrian. Many of their descendants, estimated by Dr Wolff at 200,000, are still in Abyssinia, known by the name of Felashas. Heathen proximity and intercommunion, however, have told more on the church there than Judaism.

I have already mentioned, that the Abyssinian Church is a branch of the Coptic. It is not necessary for me, then, particularly to advert to its constitution and creed. It may be proper to mention, however, that, for the last sixty years, religious controversy has raged within it, and that certain differences of opinion respecting the birth and unctions of the Saviour,—of which we have not yet received consistent and intelligent accounts,—have divided it into three parties most inimical to one another, and who will no longer partake of the communion together.*

* Compare Gobat pp. 342, 343, with Major Harris, vol. iii. pp. 18 -191.

All the Abyssinians whom I have met in India, Egypt, and Syria, seemed to deal with religion as a matter of great seriousness and importance; and I observed that the most outwardly devout pilgrims visiting Jerusalem are from Æthiopia. Nothing but religious feelings of some kind or other, indeed, could make the Abyssinians submit to the numerous fasts and penances enjoined by their ecclesiastical standards, and prescribed to them by the priests, and in which they suppose the essence of religion consists. Depraved and degraded though they almost all are, from their imperfect knowledge of that holy faith which they nominally profess, and the superstitious practices to which, acting almost on the license of Pagans, they have devoted themselves, there is still something connected with them calculated to act on our sympathy as Christians. "We may still congratulate them," says Mr Gobat, "for the little they have preserved of Christianity, for it is, after all, to this that the Christian traveller is obliged to attribute all those traces in the character of the Abyssinians which, in many respects, render them superior to all the nations of Africa. Indeed, it is a great advantage for Abyssinia to have had till now none but Christian governors. This is acknowledged even by the Musalmáns of that country. It is in this religion itself that the seed is to be found for the regeneration of the people of Abyssinia." "Abyssinia as she now is," says Sir William Harris, "presents the most singular compound of vanity, meekness, and ferocity—of devotion, superstition, and ignorance. But, compared with the other nations of Africa, she unquestionably holds a high station. She is superior in arts and in agriculture,—in laws, religion, and social condition, to all the benighted children of the sun.

The small portion of good work which does exist may be justly ascribed to the remains of the wreck of Christianity, which, although stranded on a rocky shore, and buffeted by the storms of ages, is not yet overwhelmed. .....There is, perhaps, no portion of the whole continent to which European civilization might be applied with better ultimate results; and although now dwindled into an ordinary kingdom [with several chiefs], Habesh, under proper government and proper influence, might promote the amelioration of all the surrounding people, while she resumed her original position as the first of African monarchies."

Is there no hope of the speedy amelioration of this most interesting country? The attention of the Church of England Missionary Society has been directed to it for several years. In 1820, the Rev. Mr Jowett, the agent of that institution, purchased, on account of the British and Foreign Bible Society, an entire version of the Bible into the Amharic, the principal vernacular language of Abyssinia, which had been executed at Cairo by a native of the country. It has been printed for distribution. Messrs Gobat and Kugler entered Abyssinia at the close of 1836. The latter was cut off by a melancholy accident; but the former, after a missionary journey in the country of three years, says, "The word of God, as contained in the four Gospels, and some copies of the epistles, has been distributed in every quarter of the country. The religious conversations which I had at Gondar have been reported in every province. The most instructed persons have begun, in consequence of these means, at least to doubt the truth of some of those errors which they had always considered truth itself; and some young people appear to feel the drawing of

the Father, who will lead them to Jesus, that they may receive eternal life." Mr Gobat, accompanied by Mr Isenberg, a second time visited the northern provinces. Dr Wolff also made a journey to the northern parts of the country, where he found Mr Gobat so unwell that he was obliged humanely to accompany him to the coast. Mr Isenberg returned to this country, where he prepared some elementary works in the Amharic and Galla languages. Mr Krapf, another missionary, whose interesting journal has lately been published, proceeded to Shoa, the southern province of the country, where he seemed to be acquiring a salutary influence, and where he was joined by two other labourers. I fear that, for the present, they have left the country; but I trust that it is only to return to it with greater advantages than those hitherto enjoyed. The seed which these excellent men have already sown, may yet spring up and bear an abundant harvest. From other providential occurrences more nearly connected with ourselves, we have hopes of a blessing for at least some parts of Abyssinia.

When Dr Wolff visited the country, he and Mr Isenberg encouraged an influential native to set out for India with his two promising sons, in order to procure for them a superior education. On their reaching Aden, they wrote to the Bombay Government informing it, that they had obtained letters for me, and that they intended to place themselves under my care. On their arrival in India, I was prepared to receive them into my family, and to appoint the youth to study in our mission institution. The father staid a year with me, watching diligently over his sons; and he then returned to Abyssinia, leaving his sons under my care. They remained four years and eight months under my

roof, during which time they profited much by the instructions received in my family, and by their attendance at our institution, all the members of the mission showing the deepest anxiety to advance their improvement. They distinguished themselves even among the Hindu pupils, with whom there is no lack of talent; and, what is of far more importance, they shewed the most pleasing and satisfactory signs of personal piety, being constrained by their religious feelings to sit down with our native church at the Lord's table. On my leaving India for this country, they accompanied me to Aden, from which they proceeded to Abyssinia. I have had no tidings of them since they entered that country; but this may be accounted for by the difficulty of communication. If spared, they will, through divine grace, prove lights in the midst of the surrounding darkness; and, full as they are of Christian zeal, they will seek the instruction of their countrymen. They repeatedly expressed the wish to me to return to India, if their friends would permit them, to complete their studies for the holy ministry, and to devote themselves to the work of a missionary among their kindred according to the flesh. They have the pledge from me and others that they will not be overlooked; and if no tidings of them be soon received, a special native messenger will be despatched from Aden to inquire about their fate. May they be preserved, and made a rich blessing to multitudes in Æthiopia, which, in all its extent, will yet stretch out its hands unto God.

I cannot at present extend these notices of the Independent Eastern Churches, though I have in my possession abundant materials for a much fuller descrip-

tion of them. I trust, however, that it has not altogether been in vain, that you have this day been called to advert to their past history, and present condition, and the benevolent efforts which are now being made in their behalf. When you contrast their constitution, as formed through the ministry of apostles, evangelists, confessors, and martyrs,—the splendour of their glory in the morn of their existence, when the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, unobscured by the clouds of error and superstition, directly conveyed to them life and healing, and when the Spirit of God himself rested on their members, with all the effulgence of his enlightening, purifying, and beautifying grace,—and their first love, and works, and charity, and service, and faith, and patience, amidst all the opposition which they experienced from the Prince of the power of the air, and his ministers on earth arrayed in all the untarnished and unbroken panoply of a matured and dominant paganism, and the disappointed worldliness of a perverted Judaism—with their present darkness, desolation, and ruin, you must be well nigh lost in wonder and astonishment, and tempted to leave them as they are to the fearful judgments of that God whose righteous indignation they have done so much to provoke, and long-suffering patience to exhaust. When, however, you bear in mind that some of them form a remnant wonderfully preserved for ages, though so often assailed by the sword of the false prophet, and the heathen chief, and the frauds of the man of sin—whose efforts to secure their allegiance have been desperate and unceasing—you may come to the conclusion that God may yet have rich grace in store for them, and grant them speedily a day of merciful visitation, introduced, though it may be, by fearful chastisements and

changes. If we view some of them as the allies, or even the subjects, of Babylon, we should still say to their members, in the name of God, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not her plagues: for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." If we view the lands in which they are found as the field of the world's battle, we should also remember that they are the destined scene of the world's deliverance. If no state on earth neglects its frontier, without injury, Christendom should look to its interests where they come in contact with the dominions of the Heathen and Muhammadan powers; and, if our own country at present be the most highly-favoured on earth, we should remember that its influence should be felt where protection, recovery, and advance, are most imperiously needed. If we esteem it a privilege and a duty to labour and pray for the conversion of the Jews to the faith of that Jesus whom their fathers crucified, we should not overlook those depressed communities bearing the Christian name, in which are to be found the descendants of that remnant according to the election of grace, which, in the days of the apostles, saw in Jesus of Nazareth that Saviour of whom Moses and the prophets did write. We should remember that it is as clearly revealed, that it is through God's mercy to the Gentiles that the Jews are to obtain mercy,* as that the receiving of the Jews is to be to the Gentiles as life from the dead; and that the neglected Eastern Christians are, by their idolatries and superstitions, at present stumblingblocks in the way of the Jews, while, if evangelical truth were again restored to them by the blessing of God upon our exertions,

* Rom. xi. 31.

the Jews might be provoked by them to jealousy and emulation, to their being saved. We have seen that great doors of usefulness are opening up among these Christians: and it becomes us, with others, to enter in, and labour for their enlightenment and reformation. In the view of their claims and necessities, I thank God for the formation of the Committee of the Free Church for holding correspondence with, and promoting the interests of, the Foreign Churches, which has given me this opportunity of making this first appeal in their behalf in Scotland.

In concluding, I beg to observe, that our present contributions to the Eastern Churches may be easily employed for their benefit. Members of the Armenian and Æthiopian churches belonging to Persia and Abyssinia, as well as India, have already been educated at our Mission Institution at Bombay; and I know of others willing to repair thither if the promise of assistance in supporting themselves could be held out to them. A fund, then, for the thorough education at Bombay—our great commercial emporium for Arabia, Persia, and the shores of Africa—of members of the Eastern Churches destined to return, surcharged with Christian truth, to the lands of their nativity, would, through God's grace, accomplish an amount of good not easily to be over-estimated. When, as we expect it will ere long be the case, a mission will be formed by us at Aden for the numerous Jews of Yemen, it may prove a valuable auxiliary in procuring Christian pupils for us from Africa, and eventually, by its greater proximity to that continent, supersede the Indian missionaries in the charge of them. In the joint Presbyterian mission to the Jews of Damascus, Mr

Graham regularly preaches every Lord's day in Arabic, a language which he acquired with unexampled rapidity, to as many members of the various churches of that place as he can assemble together; and aid should be given to him in defraying the expenses incurred in this department of his work, and in the circulation of such tracts and books calculated for edification as can be procured. Mr Allan, in subordination to his work among the Jews of Constantinople, may aid our American brethren there, when occasion demands, in their labours among the Armenians and Greeks, particularly by the distribution of books. Our American friends in Syria, Asia Minor, Constantinople, and other parts of Turkey, have not, as we have seen, the means of meeting the demands which are made upon them through the press; and we may much forward the cause which we have in view by assisting them in their printing operations. If the liberality of the public encourage the enterprise, direct missions to some of the Eastern churches may be founded by ourselves and other evangelical denominations in Scotland. Let us be prepared to act in earnestness, prayerfulness, and devotedness, and the Lord will graciously use our instrumentality to the promotion of his own glory.*

* Contributions for any of the objects here indicated, will be thankfully received by the Committee of the Free Church on Foreign Churches, and by the author of this Lecture.

LECTURE III.

The Ancient History of the Waldensian Church.

BY REV. THOMAS M'CRIE,

PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY TO THE SYNOD OF ORIGINAL SECEDERS.

"Where was your Church before Luther?" is a question that has been often put to Protestants by their Romish adversaries, and always with an air of triumphant confidence, as if it admitted of no reply, and decided the whole controversy. It would not be difficult to show, that the question, viewed as an objection against the truth of the Protestant religion, is founded upon mere fallacy and gratuitous assumption. It assumes not only that Christ has promised that there shall always be in the world a visible Church, but that this Church must be so visible as to be seen by all, and that it must be confined to a particular locality. But although we have every reason to believe that our Lord has always had a visible Church on earth, in which the faithful have been nourished and preserved, it does not follow that it was at all times equally visible. On the contrary, the same Word which holds out the prospect of a perpetual visibility to the Church, warrants us to expect that, during a long and dreary

interval, the Antichristian interest would maintain a visible ascendancy; while the true Church, under the emblem of the Two Witnesses in the Revelation, would be reduced within very narrow limits, and driven to preach the gospel in a state of great distress and depression: so that the Church may have existed under a visible form, though, like the sun in the heavens, it may have been often and long involved in obscurity, though it may have been hidden from the observation of the world, and though the ecclesiastical historian may search in vain or to little purpose for the records of its organic existence. In like manner, although Christ has given a promise of perpetuity to his Church, it does not follow that this promise is to be allocated to any particular Church, far less, as our opponents have the simplicity to believe, and the presumption to maintain, that this promise was made to the Church of Rome.

The great question certainly is, not where our Church was, but where our religion was, before the Reformation? Where did true Christianity exist, the spirit and power of a living faith? To this question we reply, that true Christianity, though buried for ages, to a great extent, under the rubbish of Popery, was never extinct. It lived in the Word of God, "which liveth and abideth for ever;" in those sacred records, which, in spite of the efforts of Rome to suppress or supplant them, Providence has preserved entire and unpolluted. And it lived in the hearts of the faithful who were raised up from time to time, to protest against her apostacy, and who, though nominally within the pale of the Romish Church, had not received the mark of the beast, neither worshipped his image. The summons, "Come out of her, my people," clearly intimates that before the Reforma-

tion, which may be viewed as its response, Christ had a people within mystical Babylon, whom he owned as his people, and who were as distinct from her as the captive Jews were from ancient Babylon. We may go farther, however, and reply that we find our Church before Luther, not in the Roman, but in the Catholic Church, or in those branches of the Church universal which adhered to the truth of the Gospel. We do not seek our pedigree in the Church of Rome, which, from her very constitution, is a schismatical Church, and which we view as, beyond all question, the Antichrist of Scripture, and consequently no church of Christ at all. She may pretend to be the mistress of other Churches, but in virtue of this very claim to ascendancy, she forfeits her catholicity. If she will be the Roman, she cannot be the Catholic Church. Still she is only a particular Church—a mere piece of the Church—fixed down and stereotyped within the locality of her seven mountains—the Roman Church, bearing, in the very name that she boasts of, the certificate of her schism. The Catholic Church is composed of all the churches of Christ, combined into a whole, not under the name or authority of any particular church, but under the name and authority of Christ, the Head of them all, and embracing "all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours." Now that such Churches did exist during the darkest ages before the Reformation, we have no reason to doubt. It is not necessary that we should be able to trace their existence, far less their uninterrupted succession. Our faith in this matter is founded, not on the testimony of man, but on the sure promises of Jehovah. In tracing the descent of these Churches from the Apostles, we are guided, through the intricate

and sometimes almost impenetrable course of their history, not by the names of Popish bishops, little known and long forgotten, if indeed they ever existed except in the imagination of their monkish chroniclers, but by the clear, sparkling, living stream of evangelical truth, leading up to the sacred fountain. And in identifying ourselves with these churches, we are not actuated by the vain ambition of "tacking ourselves on" to antiquity, as if we considered it necessary to establish such a link of connection, in order to prove our descent from the Apostolic Church; for the true link is not corporeal, but spiritual, or, as one of the fathers expresses it, "Where the Church is, there is the Spirit, and where the Spirit is, there is the Church." Our object simply is to show that, even during the darkest ages of the world, "God has not left himself without witness," and to illustrate the substantial unity in the faith which has at all times distinguished the followers of the Lamb. On this point we are not left to mere conjecture. We have the testimony of unimpeachable history—a testimony which recent investigations have rendered clearer, fuller, and more explicit, than ever it was before, that during the darkest ages, there were, not individuals merely within the pale of the Romish Church, but whole Churches living in a state of separation from her, and retaining the ancient faith of the gospel—Churches which can be traced back to the days of primitive Christianity, and some of which continued to exist down to the time of the Reformation—true branches and living representatives of the Catholic Church of Christ. We might have referred, as an illustration, to the Syrian Churches, which have been proved by the researches of Dr Claudius Buchanan, confirmed by

subsequent inquiries, to have preserved, for many centuries, their independence and their primitive purity. But we confine ourselves at present to the Christians of the Alps, who, under the general names of Waldenses and Albigenses, can be proved to have retained from the earliest ages the character of true Churches of Christ.

It may not be out of place, before proceeding further, to advert a little to the evidence which we possess of the antiquity of the Christian Churches on both sides of the Alps, who were, in more than one respect, closely connected together. The difficulties necessarily attendant on all such inquiries, and which have created much confusion among Protestant as well as Popish writers, have been greatly enhanced by a circumstance which deserves more consideration than has hitherto been given to it. We refer to the variety of names which have been given to the early Christians, invented by their enemies, and too easily adopted and freely applied to them by their professed friends. We say invented by their enemies, for we have evidence to show that they were rejected as calumnies and by-names by those to whom they were originally applied. It has been the uniform policy of Rome, to vilify and defame every party or Church which has dared to question her supremacy. In order to uphold her claim to catholicity, or universality, it becomes an essential point with her, that there should be no other Church on earth to dispute the palm with her. The existence of another, an independent Church, is fatal to the pretensions of Popery. Other Churches may have brothers or sisters:—Rome is a mother-church, and will own none but sons or daughters. Other Churches may quarrel with their neighbours,

and, like Abraham and Lot, "separate themselves" to the right or left :—Rome must annihilate others, or be herself annihilated. Her motto is, *Aut Cesar, aut nihil.*" To this cause, which furnishes a key for the explanation of all her persecutions in the past, as well as her proselyting zeal in the present time, we must trace the policy, cunning as it was contemptible, of inventing nicknames, and a multitude of various dresses for those who opposed her pretensions. These appellatives were derived from various sources—sometimes from the names of individuals who happened to distinguish themselves for their piety, or success in gaining converts, sometimes from the places where the Christians chiefly flourished, at other times from the most trifling peculiarities, such as the cut of their clothes, or the shape of their sandals. Thus, on the Italian side of the Alps, we meet with some of them called Berengarians, from the famous Berenger of Tours, Cathari, which corresponds with our term of Puritans, Beghards, Paulicians, Paterins, Subalpines, and Vaudois. On the French side, we have them denominated Albigenses, from Albi, a town in the south of France, where they abounded for some time; Waldenses, from Peter Waldo of Lyons, whose followers again have been styled Lyonists, poor men of Lyons; Sabatati, from a kind of sandal called *zabata*, which some of them wore; with a variety of other names too tedious to mention, and the very number of which shows the prevalence of their opinions.*

The obvious design, however, of this pyebald nomen-

* Usher, de Christ. Eccl. Success. and Statu, p. 108. Mosheim, cent. xii. We do not recite here the much more opprobrious epithets, founded on the pretended crimes ascribed to them, and applied to them, not only by their vulgar persecutors, but by learned historians. Perrin Hist. des Vaudois, p. 10.

clature, was to affix to these confessors of Christ the character of obscure and paltry schismatics, following divisive courses from the true Catholic Church, and ranging themselves under the banner of some heresiarch, instead of that of the Pope, the sole representative of Christ on earth. The device succeeded, at the time, to admiration. All true Catholics shunned the detested names of the heretics, with more horror than ever true Churchman disavowed the name of Puritan or Methodist. The good men, again, to whom they were applied, when summoned before the inquisitorial courts of that age, found themselves placed in the trying dilemma, of either disowning the degrading soubriquet, and thus appearing to renounce their peculiar profession, or of acknowledging it, and thus confessing themselves schismatics. In either case advantage was taken of them by the wily inquisitors of Rome, as we learn from the bitter taunts and complaints contained in their writings, and the records of their courts. "Are you a Waldensian? are you a Subalpine?" would their inquisitors demand. If they refused the name, and begged to explain that they were Christians, and acknowledged none as their master but One in heaven,—"See the obstinacy of these heretics," it was said; "they will never give you a direct answer!" If, again, they owned the designation,—"Ah, the schismatics!" was the exclamation of their inveterate foes; "they prefer the name of Waldensians and Subalpines to that of Christians!" But these multifarious titles have been productive of more lasting mischief. They have tended to involve the history of these Christians in almost inextricable confusion, and rendered the study of it any thing but inviting to the general reader. What is still more to be deplored, they have led to disputes

among even Protestant writers, who, misled by the similarity, or perplexed by the number of these wretched nicknames, instead of searching together for the veins of evangelic truth, under whatever kind of strata it might be found, have unhappily quarrelled with each other, and spent their time in idle controversies as to the respective origin of the Waldenses and Albigenses, and the precise differences between the Paulicians and the Paterins.* The advantage which such disputes afford to our Romish adversaries, it is needless to show; and it must increase our regret to know, that they are wholly uncalled for. What need we care for the names by which their enemies stigmatized them, when the fact stands out unquestioned, that with the exception of some diversities of sentiment and practice of an inferior kind, which can easily be accounted for from differences of locality, they all agreed in protesting against the supremacy of the Pope, and the characteristic errors of Popery, and in holding the main distinctive tenets of the Protestant creed?

Another grand device of the enemy, which has succeeded in creating confusion and contention in regard

* We might refer particularly to the unhappy turn given to this controversy by Mr Maitland, in his "Tracts and Documents" regarding the ancient Albigenses and Waldenses, in which he attempts, not in the very best spirit, and certainly without any great success, to overthrow the evidence of Mr Faber, in his "Sacred Calendar of Prophecy." The later work of Mr Faber on the Ancient Vallenses and Albigenses, is one of the most complete answers to all the charges which have been brought against the antiquity and theological purity of these churches. Considering the tone in which he has been treated by Mr Maitland, we are not surprised that Mr Faber should not have referred, by name, to an opponent to whose boastfully paraded testimonies his work is a more than sufficient reply.

to these churches, was to charge them with the most odious heresies and the most revolting crimes. The Albigenses, in particular, as certain of these Christians were called, have been confidently accused of being *Manicheans*, a class of heretics who appeared in the early ages of Christianity, and who held, among other things, that the visible universe, or the whole of matter, was the creation of the devil. This charge, which has also been brought against the Paulicians, who emigrated to the south of France, and who are represented as the ancestors of the Albigenses, has been most satisfactorily disposed of; and it has been evinced, by a large induction of facts, chiefly drawn from the writings of their accusers, that the only heresies of which they were guilty, were the blessed truths of the gospel which we profess, and that, as in the case of the primitive Christians, against whom the same kind of odious calumnies were raised, the only crime of which they stand convicted, was that of leading blameless and holy lives.* Indeed, when we consider the character of the tribunals before which they were tried; when we know that they made it a rule to receive the testimony of the most abandoned characters against them, while they paid no regard to the disclaimers of the accused; when we reflect, moreover, how easy it was for them to put a forced construction on the harmless language and the sound sentiments of a simple and unlettered people, which would amount to a charge of heresy, and how much it was for their interest to show that these separatists were as much opposed to the faith of the gospel as they were to the authority of Rome; we cease to wonder at the sentences of these monkish courts, and are only amazed

* See Faber's Vallenses and Albigenses, pp. 68–270. Peyran's Hist. Defence of the Waldenses or Vaudois, pp. 15, 147.

at the amount of saving truth which, it appears, even from the testimonies of their antagonists, was held by the much calumniated Churches. Were it in our power to examine the records of these inquisitorial dens, instead of the reports carefully prepared for the eye of the public by interested agents, we have no doubt that evidence still more satisfactory would be found to show that, after the manner which they called heresy, these Christians in the middle ages worshipped in spirit and in truth the God of their fathers. Even as it is, the cloud of unmerited scandal having been blown away, we behold the interesting spectacle of Churches whose antiquity stretches back into the age of the apostles. The Christians in the south of France, during the twelfth century, are seen to be only the remote descendants and representatives of Churches which are known to have existed in Armenia under the name of the Paulicians, in the middle of the seventh century, or about the year 650; while those on the Italian side of the Alps, at the same period, can be shown to be merely the gleanings of a harvest of Churches, which remained in a state of independence of Rome and her corruptions from time immemorial, until mowed down by the relentless scythe of persecution.*

The Vaudois or Waldenses of Piedmont, to whom it is time to direct our more special attention, are not less interesting a people when viewed as the last relics and representatives of these ancient churches, than they are for their history as a separate church. Dwelling amidst the lofty recesses of the Cottian Alps, in those beautiful and sequestered valleys which are formed by

* See Allix's Remarks on the Ancient Churches of Piedmont, p. 109, &c.

the mountain torrents, this ancient Church has asserted from the earliest ages her independence of Rome, and preserved, in the face of the most relentless and unwearied persecution, the primitive simplicity of the gospel. The Creator seems to have constructed these retreats for what he designed them to be,—the asylum of a persecuted flock. The scenery presents a striking combination of all that is grand and beautiful in nature. Alps piled upon Alps in majestic confusion—tremendous crags intersected by raging torrents—steep gullies, accessible only by a single gorge—appear as if purposely thrown as a rampart around this little sanctuary of truth; while the valleys beneath, carefully cultivated, are so many storehouses in which nature has collected her most luxurious fruits. In this abode, which may be regarded as the hollow of the Almighty's hand, the descendants of this Church reside, down to the present day. Placed between Italy and France, they bear no resemblance to the natives of either country, in manners, language, or religion. "Dwelling alone in the midst of the people," they still retain all the peculiarities of an ancient race; and in surveying them, one feels, as on inspecting an antique building, curious to know something of their past history.

In addition to the confusion arising from that variety of names already noticed, it so happens, that by what we can only regard as an unlucky coincidence in the sound and spelling of the words, the Vaudois of Piedmont, who were sometimes termed Waldenses, which some consider a corruption of Vallenses, and sometimes Leonists, from Leo of Ravenna, have been confounded with the followers of Peter Waldo of Lyons, who were also called Waldenses and Lyonists, or Poor

Men of Lyons. It is easy to see how these names should have led to confused and apparently contradictory statements in regard to the origin of the Vaudois. But from whatever source they may have derived the name of Waldenses, and whatever other name may have been applied to them, it is beyond all doubt that they existed, as a distinct church and people, many ages before the appearance of Waldo. This person was a rich merchant of Lyons, who came into notice about the middle of the twelfth century, and distinguished himself by his piety, by his translation of the Scriptures, and his success in gaining converts to the faith. But anxious as the Romish writers are to identify the persecuted Vaudois of the Alps with the name of Waldo, and thus make them no older than the twelfth century, we have happily sufficient evidence, not only from their own records, but from the writings of their opponents, to show the contrary. It seems but fair, in estimating the antiquity of any people, that we should take into account, as a very material testimony, their own records and traditions. The ancient histories of this people were destroyed by the rage of their enemies, who sought thus to exterminate the memory as well as the whole race of these so-called heretics. But among their manuscripts, which were preserved by Sir Samuel Morland, and deposited in the University of Cambridge, there is a catechism bearing the date of 1587, in which the question is put, "How long is it since the pure doctrine has been preached in the valleys?" and the answer is, "About 500 years, as near as can be gathered from any histories, but according to the opinion of the inhabitants, from father to son, time out of mind." The most venerable of these documents, called the Noble Lesson, which is a simple exposition

of the Christian doctrine in verse, not only bears evidence of its own antiquity in its dialect, but contains its precise date, 1100, and speaks of the term Vaudois as even at that period applied to them in contempt. It commences thus :—

> Brethren, give ear to a noble lesson,—
> One thousand and one hundred years are completed
> Since it was written, that we are in the last times.

And then, after describing the Christian, it adds,

> Such a one is termed a Vaudois;
> And they seek occasion, by lies and deceit,
> To deprive him of the fruits of his toil.

" As for us," said the venerable Peyran to Dr Gilly, " we have been called heretics, and Arians, and Manicheans, and Cathari; but we are, like yourselves, a Church built up in Christ. We have adhered to the pure tenets of the apostolic age, and the Roman Catholics have separated from us. Ours is the apostolic succession, from which the Roman hierarchy has departed."* " Neither," says the brave Henry Arnaud, " has their church ever been reformed; whence arises its title, *Evangelic.* The Vaudois are, in fact, descended from those refugees from Italy, who, after St Paul had there preached the gospel, abandoned their beautiful country, and fled, like the woman mentioned in the Apocalypse, to these wild mountains, where they have to this day handed down the gospel from father to son, in the same purity and simplicity as it was preached by St Paul."†

* Gilly's Narrative, p. 79.
† Blair's Hist. of the Waldenses, i. 7.

Listen to the testimony of their enemies, and you will find that it entirely coincides with their own traditions, and by doing so, furnishes a confirmation of their truth, which has all the weight of the deposition of an adverse witness who voluntarily comes forward to support the declaration of the pannel at the bar. One, for example, tells us, that "the ancient Vaudois would admit no other name than that of Apostolicals, as they maintain that they are the successors of the apostles and the primitive church." A second declares, that "their origin cannot be found out with certainty, and that in the ninth and tenth centuries they were not a new sect." A third testifies with much bitterness, that "always, and in every age, the valley of Angrogna had been filled with heretics." A fourth makes the same remark regarding Toulouse; while another, who was both an apostate and an inquisitor,* and has written bitterly against them, confesses, that "this sect is the most ancient of all, some supposing that it existed from the days of Pope Sylvester, while others trace its origin from the times of the apostles."†

Besides all this, we can account for the prevalence of

* Reinerius Sacco, who flourished during the earlier part of the fifteenth century.

† Peyran's Hist. Defence of the Vaudois, p. 25–29; Morland's Hist. of the Evang. Churches of Piedmont, p. 10–29; Gilly's Researches, 78; Faber's Vallenses, &c. The two last of these writers have accused Dr M'Crie of denying the antiquity of the Waldenses, or confounding them with the Albigenses, in his History of the Reformation in Italy. It is hardly necessary to observe, what Mr Faber seems willing to allow, (Vallenses, *Preface*), that this is an entire mistake, arising from their not attending to the fact, that Dr M'Crie speaks simply of these churches, under whatever name they might go, as alike "the hereditary witnesses for the truth against the corruptions of Rome." (Italy, p. 4, 2d ed.)

evangelical sentiments among the Vaudois, and can trace their history in the soundness of their creed and the purity of their lives. The labours of Claude, bishop of Turin, the diocese within which the Valleys were included, in the year 823, effected a reformation in the district to such an extent, and in such a spirit, that he deserves to be classed with the most eminent of our reformers. He declared war against all the prevailing corruptions of the church, particularly against images, the use as well as worship of which he condemned. He ordered all the images, and even the crosses, to be cast out of the church, and devoted to the flames. He treated relics with the utmost contempt, and severely inveighed against superstitious pilgrimages to the tombs of the saints. In short, he published commentaries on several of the books of Scripture, from which it appears, that he held the leading doctrines of the gospel, and condemned the corruptions of Rome. The Vaudois gratefully acknowledge their obligations to the zealous services of Claude, and to these, among other causes, we may ascribe the Scriptural knowledge, and freedom from superstition, which have ever distinguished this primitive people.

The distinguishing tenets which they held clearly indicate their derivation. All agreed in regarding the Church of Rome as the Babylon of the Apocalypse, in denying the corporeal presence in the Eucharist, rejecting the sacraments of confirmation, confession, and marriage, and in charging with idolatry the exposure of images in the churches. The bells which summoned the people to the adoration of these emblems, they called the trumpets of demons. And if the body of Christ, said they, had been as large as one of our mountains, it must have been devoured long ago, by the num-

bers whom they pretend to have eaten of it.* But they were no less distinguished for that purity and piety of life, which is the best commentary on a sound religious creed. Their adversaries, unable to deny so conspicuous a feature, could only account for it by having recourse to the ordinary shift of all such characters, and ascribing it to hypocrisy.

"All other sects," says the inquisitor formerly referred to, "render themselves odious, by reason of their blasphemies against God himself, but, on the contrary, the Waldenses have great appearances of piety, inasmuch as they live justly in the sight of men. They believe well, as concerning God, in all things, and hold all the articles of the creed. There is *only one thing against them*, and that is, they hate and blaspheme the Church of Rome, and hereby they easily gain credit and belief among the people."†

Another feature illustrative of the Christian character of this ancient colony, and accounting for the rapid promulgation of their opinions, was their missionary spirit. Like the Church at Jerusalem, when scattered abroad by a great persecution, they went everywhere preaching the gospel. The following curious account, given by a contemporary historian, discovers the mode in which they sometimes improved their opportunities for enlightening their neighbours, and shows that the

* Sismondi, Hist. of the Crusades, p. 7.

† The same testimony to their strict purity is borne by Thuanus, one of the most candid of Romish historians, who records with high praise the self-devoted act of a Waldensian young woman, who, on being pursued by the soldiers of La Trinita, threw herself headlong from a tremendous precipice into the gulf below, that "by a generous death she might escape the lust of her barbarous pursuers."

colporteurs of France follow no modern trade.* "The heretics cunningly devise how they may insinuate themselves into the familiarity of the noble and the great. They exhibit for sale to the lords and ladies, rings, and robes, and other wares which are likely to be acceptable. When they have sold them, if asked whether they have any more goods for sale, one of these travelling pedlars will answer: I have jewels far more precious than these, which I will readily give you, if you will secure me against being betrayed to the priests. The security being pledged, the heretic then proceeds to say: I possess a brilliant gem from God himself, for, through it, man comes to the knowledge of God: and I have another which casts out so ruddy a heat, that it forthwith kindles the love of God in the heart of the owner. In like manner proceeds he to speak of all his other metaphorical gems. Then he recites a chapter from Scripture, or from some part of our Lord's discourses.—After this the heretic draws a comparison between the Roman Church and the ancient Pharisees:—and then puts the question, Judge ye, which faith is the more perfect, that of our community, or that of the Church of Rome, and when you have honestly judged, choose that which you deem the best."† Animated by such a spirit as this, we need not be surprised to learn, that these Christians of the Alps should have penetrated, not only into Italy and France, but into Germany,

* Mr Faber applies this account to the French Waldenses, and maintains that the Vaudois never displayed the migratory and missionary spirit of the Albigenses; but the truth is, the Christians known under these names always showed this spirit, until compressed by the force of persecution within the narrow limits of the valleys. Peyran, Nouvelles Lettres, pp. 48—56.

† Reiner. de Hæret. Faber, p. 73.

Bohemia, Spain, and even England. Wherever they went, they carried the light of the gospel with them, and feeble as that light was, it pierced through the thick darkness which it could not dispel, with a pure and steady radiance. Thus, literally "set upon a hill," the Waldenses have verified their ancient device, that of a lighted candle, surrounded by seven stars, and bearing the motto, *Lux lucet in tenebris*, "The light shineth in darkness." And thus may this Church be viewed as the living link between the primitive and the protestant Church,—the archway between the apostles and the reformers.

But there is another mark by which we may trace the history of this ancient Church—a mark, alas! too well descriptive of a Church of Christ—the same by which their cruel persecutors were wont to track the poor fugitives to their retreats in the mountains—the mark of *blood*. The fury of persecution fell first on those that have been termed Albigenses, who occupied the province of Languedoc, in France; and as we view these Christians as forming part of the same Church, under another name, with that of the Vaudois, who were merely the grape-gleanings of the vintage, we may advert a little to the sufferings they underwent. In the year 1208, the vengeance of the Court of Rome was directed against this unhappy people, under pretext of waging war against their sovereign, Raymond, Count of Toulouse. The Pope issued a Bull, in which he ordered that this prince should be anathematized in all the churches. "As we must not observe faith," said his holiness, "with those who keep not faith towards God, or who are separated from the communion of the faithful, we discharge, by apostolic authority, all those who believe themselves bound to this Count by any

oath of alliance or fidelity; we permit every catholic man to pursue his person, to occupy and retain his territories, especially for the purpose of exterminating heresy."* On the faith of this barbarous edict, the monks began to preach up crusades against the heretics; and, in an incredibly short period, the plains of France presented a most extraordinary spectacle. A thousand knights, the flower of French chivalry, are drawn up in battle array, encased in iron armour. Bishops have blessed their standards, and engaged to pray for their success. Priests have absolved them from all their sins, past and prospective, and promised them heaven for the blood which they are to shed. Each of these mailed warriors is a pilgrim, engaged, he thinks, in a holy war, on which Heaven smiles, and to feel pity for the victims of which would, in his apprehension, be a crime to be confessed to the priest, and only to be wiped off by bathing in the blood of his fellow-creatures. These are the Crusaders; and along with them are fifty thousand meaner men,—persons of the most abandoned characters, animated at once by the lust of rapine, the rage of bigotry, and the hope of heavenly pardon. At the head of this fanatical band is Simon de Montfort, a name which stands out in the annals of history, stained with every crime that can tarnish the laurels of the hero.

Onwards rolls the fiery mass to the scene of its destination. The Count of Toulouse, trembling at their approach, yields to the Pope, and is only forgiven on condition of his joining in the bloody expedition. They approach the town of Beziers, where sixty thousand people, including women and children, are assem-

* Sismondi's History of the Crusades, p. 21.

bled, among whom are many Roman Catholics. These, when required by their bishop to betray their fellow-citizens, nobly refuse; and the inhabitants, animated by a common sentiment of devotion to their country, make a vigorous but unsuccessful resistance. The knights of the crusade, having asked the Pope's legate how they are to distinguish between the catholics and the heretics, receive the celebrated reply, "*Kill them all; the Lord will know well who are his!*" His orders are executed to the letter; not a living creature escapes; and when the last of the sixty thousand are massacred, they set fire to the city, and reduce it to one vast funereal pile!

In vain do the wretched inhabitants, filled with consternation on hearing of this horrible act, betake themselves to fortified places, hitherto deemed impregnable; it is only to be gathered to the slaughter. De Montfort has brought with him engines of war hitherto unknown. Among these is one which, from its form and mode of working, was named *the Cat*. A huge moveable wooden tower, covered with sheepskins, is moved by the soldiers within, close to the wall of the beseiged city. Its side then opens, and an immense beam, armed with iron hooks, is projected like the paw of the cat, which shakes the wall with reiterated blows, and then with its claws tears out and pulls down the loosened stones. With this instrument De Montfort approaches the strongly fortified castle of Cabaret; the cat is pushed forward, and its terrible claws soon open a passage for the knights of the crusade. The priests, clad in their pontifical habits, await with undisguised eagarness the commencement of the carnage; and the result may be told in the language of one of them who was present. "Very soon,"

says he, "they dragged out the knights of the castle. The noble Count immediately ordered them to be hanged; but perceiving that this would occasion delay, he commanded the rest to be massacred; and the pilgrims (i. e. Crusaders) receiving the order with the greatest avidity, very soon massacred them all on the spot. The lady of the castle, who was an execrable heretic, was, by the Count's orders, thrown into a pit, which was filled up with stones. Afterwards our pilgrims collected the innumerable heretics that the castle contained, and *burned them alive with the utmost joy.*"*

The Crusaders, however, did not always proceed to immediate execution. Candour requires us to state, that, on one occasion at least, they proposed to their victims to save their lives, on the simple condition of abjuring their religion. The castle of Minerva surrendered after a vigorous siege; the Crusaders entered singing *Te Deum*, and found the men assembled in one house, and the women in another, preparing themselves, on their knees, for the fate they anticipated. An abbot was ordered to preach to them; but men and women unanimously refused to comply with his terms: "We will have none of your faith; we have renounced the Church of Rome." De Montford ordered an immense pile of wood to be erected in the square, and the people, amounting to more than a hundred and forty, were conducted to the spot. "Be converted to the Catholic faith," cried the Count, "or ascend that pile." Not one complied with his demand. The fire was kindled, and filled the square with the conflagration. But no force was required to fulfil the other part of his alternative. The martyrs voluntarily plunged into the flames.

* Sismondi, pp. 65, 76.

By a series of atrocities like these, which the writers of romance require to conceal, lest the effect of their gaudy pictures of the Crusades should be spoiled, and the delicate feelings of their readers should be shocked, but which the pen of faithful history has disclosed, the plains to the north of the Alps were laid desolate. The Inquisition, following in the wake of the crusaders, completed their work; and those branches of the Alpine church, which have been called the Albigenses, were all but exterminated. Still, however, the churches in the valleys of Piedmont, and in Calabria, protected partly by the inaccessible nature of their country, partly by the cupidity of their rulers, who derived much of their revenues from their industry, continued to flourish; and so long as they existed, proved an eye-sore to the Pontiff and his clergy. In the year 1400, an attack was made on the Valley of Pragela, when the ground being covered with snow, the inhabitants were taken by surprise, and found themselves shut up to one retreat alone, a mountain called the Albergo. Thither they fled with their wives and children, pursued by the ruthless invaders. Mothers were seen carrying their infants, and leading their children by the hand; but thus encumbered, many were overtaken and cruelly put to death. The inclemency of an Alpine winter night finished what the soldiers began. When the morning dawned, eighty infants were found dead in their cradles, and their mothers expiring by their side. Some blows leave a scar on a nation's heart which time cannot efface. Two hundred years after this catastrophe, the natives of Pragela could not mention it without a shudder; and it is not forgotten even to this day. Rome needs not to renew her persecutions again: she has only to show her teeth, to prove her unchanged

temper, and she will revive the memory of the past, and marshall against her every generous feeling that God has planted in the breast of man.

Patient as the Vaudois were under unavoidable suffering, they were not so destitute of spirit as to suffer themselves to be cut down as Christians, when they were able to fight for themselves as men; nor could they tamely submit to see their wives and children butchered before their eyes, so long as they had brawny arms and brave hearts to defend them. In this, as in many other points, they bear a close resemblance to our own Scottish forefathers in the time of persecution. About the close of the fifteenth century, when 18,000 troops were mustered against them, under the profaned banner of the cross, they turned upon their assailants. Planting themselves in the straits of their mountain fortresses, the front ranks protected with long wooden shields, while those behind fought with slings and cross-bows, they repulsed the attack. On this occasion, while their fathers and brothers were engaged in the unequal conflict, the women and children, placed in the rear, were loudly imploring on their knees the assistance of Heaven, crying, "O God, help us!" Their prayers, which excited the ridicule of the brutal and bigotted soldiery, seemed to have been listened to with more regard by their heavenly Protector,—a dense fog which descended on the mountains having completely confounded and dispersed their assailants.*

It is extremely interesting to notice, as the Reformation began to dawn on Europe, how gladly its healing beams were hailed by these watchmen and witnesses on the mountains, and how cordially, and, as it were,

* Perrin, 153.

instinctively, they adjoined themselves to the Reformers. No sooner did they hear of this event, than they sent some of their pastors as deputies to wait upon and consult with the most eminent of the Reformers. In the month of October 1530, two of these deputies, George Morel and Peter Masson, visited Haller and Ecolampade at Basle, and Bucer and Capito at Strasburg. They told them that having heard of the gifts of the Holy Spirit bestowed on the Reformers, as appeared by their blessed fruits, they had come to share in their illumination, and obtain instruction on some points on which they were in doubt, and others on which they modestly acknowledged and deplored their ignorance, which they ascribed partly to their own negligence, and partly to the unfavourable circumstances in which they had been lately placed. "Such as we are," said they, "we are poor instructors of a little flock, which has now for four hundred years, nay, according to the general tradition of our people, from the time of the apostles, lived among cruel thorns, though not, as good men may easily conceive, without the special favour of Christ." They then gave a long account of their ecclesiastical discipline, their doctrine, worship, and customs. Thus brought into contact with the reformers, without having had any previous concert with or knowledge of each other, it is striking to observe how closely, in all the leading points of doctrine, and even of discipline, they were found to agree together. Guided by the same Word and the same Spirit, never was there a more complete illustration of what the apostle denominates "the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God." Their confession of faith, so far as it went, was nearly, in the eyes of our reformers, unexceptionable; and the few points on which the de-

puties expressed doubts, referred to doctrines of an abstruse and controversial kind, with respect to which, as held by Luther and others, they had received a garbled account. The only points of discipline on which they followed a different practice from the reformed churches, were that, they retained something like confession, when consolation or advice was required, but without superstition or tyranny—that their pastors lived for the most part unmarried—and that they had females, called sisters, who lived together under a vow of perpetual celibacy.* On other points, there was the most wonderful agreement. Their pastors, or *barbes* as they were called, were set apart to the holy ministry by prayer, and by the imposition of the hands of their brethren, and were freely elected by the people. On being presented before them, they were to entreat the people to receive them, and to pray God for them that they might be worthy of such a charge. They had no other food or raiment than what was bestowed on them by the free charity of the good people whom they instructed, or what they gained by the labour of their own hands, the young and able-bodied pastors being expected to work at some employment, though the aged were exempted from such a necessity.†

Attempts have been made to show that they had

* These practices do not appear to have existed among them in the earlier ages of their Church, but to have been introduced after the 12th century, with the view of wiping away the odious calumnies propagated against them by their popish enemies. Faber's Vallenses, p. 475. For the same purpose, they had been for some time in the habit of occasionally attending mass in the popish chapels, a practice which they agreed to abándon, on the recommendation of the reformers.

† Ruchat, Hist. Reform. Suisse, ii. 252. Perrin, 210.

bishops, and the Episcopal form of government, and even of worship, among them. But never were attempts of this nature more unsuccessful. Such assertions are contradicted by the ancient constitutions of the Waldensian Church, by the testimonies of their enemies, and by their own unvaried disclaimers. Sir Samuel Morland has observed, that such suppositions are "mere fictitious notions and chimeras," and that "none of their pastors were empowered to act in the least matter without the consent and advice of their brethren and associates in the ministry." Their form of government was, in fact, purely Presbyterian. "As to their synodical constitutions," says the same writer, "their manuscripts tell us that the barbes, or pastors, assembled once a-year, to treat of their affairs in a general council—that this council was constantly held in the month of September, and that some hundreds of years ago, there were seen assembled together in one synod, no less than a hundred and forty barbes." The same manuscript adds, that "they had always their consistories, and a form of discipline among themselves, except it were in the time of persecution, and then the barbes had their consistories in secret, and did also preach to their congregations, during the winter season, in their own private houses, and in the summer time, upon the tops of mountains, as the people were there feeding their flocks.*" The Waldensian deputies having heard that a difference of practice prevailed among the reformers on this point, made it one of their questions for information, "If there ought to be degrees of dignity among the ministers of the Word of God, such as bishops, priests, and deacons?" And Ecolam-

* Morland, p. 179—183.

pade, in his answer to this inquiry, stated, that while ministers of the gospel ought to avoid those titles and degrees of dignity, which savoured of Papistical pomp and pride, he saw no harm in some of them being presidents alone, while others gave themselves to the preaching of the Word; and that some might be visitors, whom, if they chose, they might call bishops." But this suggestion, moderate as it was, was never adopted by the Vaudois; their ministers remained simple pastors; and even to this day, notwithstanding endeavours made to introduce something like the Episcopal form among them, by those who had showed them much kindness, and whose wishes they had every temptation to gratify, they have uniformly adhered to the simplicity of their ancient Discipline.* On other points, they were found to have the same agreement with the great body of the reformed Churches. The Commissioners appointed in 1506, by Louis XII. of France, to examine into the truth of the false reports which had been circulated against the Vaudois, reported to their master, "that they had visited all the parishes and temples of the places mentioned; that they found neither images, nor the smallest appearance of any ornaments, nor of the masses and ceremonies of the Church of Rome; that the people were not guilty either of sorcery nor impurity, nor of any of the horrible crimes related of them, but lived like honest men, without injuring any one; that they observed their Sabbaths

* An attempt having been lately made to induce them at least to appoint one as perpetual moderator of their Synods, it was unanimously resisted. Among others who spoke against it, was a venerable elder of the Church, who said,—"What would our friends in Scotland say or think of us, if we should adopt the constant moderator?"

with punctuality; that they caused their infants to be baptized according to the order of the primitive Church; that they taught their children the articles of the Christian faith, and of the ten commandments of God; that they prayed with their eyes lifted up to heaven; and that the Word of God was purely expounded among them." On hearing this report, Louis exclaimed with an oath, "These men are better than I and the rest of my Catholic people." We shall only add here, that the deputies having returned to the valleys, a meeting of Synod was held at Angrogna, at which, aided by the suggestions of the reformers, several practical errors into which they had fallen were corrected, and a new Confession of Faith was drawn up, embodying the doctrines of the Reformation, which was cordially subscribed and solemnly sworn to in September 1532. This Confession having been approved of by the Reformers, the Vaudois may, from this date, be viewed as forming a branch of the great Protestant family. Vital religion was revived by this happy union; and it may be truly said, "The wilderness and the solitary place was glad for them, and the desert did rejoice and blossom as the rose."

It is often seen, however, in the history of Christ's church, that a time of spiritual awakening and religious attainment is followed by a season of severe trial. In 1536, Francis I., the king of France, having conquered Piedmont, was induced by the solicitations of the Pope to sanctify his conquest by attempting the conversion, or, failing in that, the extermination of his heretical subjects. Deaf to their humble entreaties, he swore that "he did not burn Lutherans in France to permit a reserve of them in the Alps." He commenced by employing the arm of the law. The parliament of

Turin commanded them, on pain of death, to dismiss their revered pastors, who had spoken to them the word of God, and receive a relay of priests to sing masses to them. The Vaudois nobly replied, "that they could by no means obey commands contrary to the laws of God, and that they would render to Cesar the things that were Cesar's, and to God the things that are God's."* Soon the sounds of war, and the shrieks of massacre, were heard on both sides of the Alps. On the one side, next to France, stood two smiling towns, Merindoles and Cabrieres. These were doomed to fire and sword, and a wretch, named Oppeda, was charged with the execution. The inhabitants were destroyed without regard to age or sex. Forty females were locked in a barn, and the straw within having been set on fire, the poor creatures, on attempting to escape, were driven back by the spears of the gallant soldiers, and miserably perished in the flames. Mothers, having their breasts cut off, were left to perish with their infants. But it were too shocking to dwell on these barbarities. Upwards of eight hundred perished in Cabrieres alone. On the other side of the Alps, in Calabria, where a flourishing colony of the Vaudois had long been permitted to dwell in peace by their rulers, who derived a rich revenue from their industry, the court of Rome found another bloody revenge. Here there was not even the poor pretext of war. No trumpet sounded to battle; even the excitement of the chase was awanting; it was a human battue, for the victims were found cooped up in their hiding-places, and made no resistance. The scene wanted even the decent formalities of a judicial execution. It was con-

* Blair, vol. ii. p. 222.

ducted with all the coolness and deliberation of the shambles. "To tell you the truth," says an eye-witness, "I can compare it to nothing but the slaughter of so many sheep. They were all shut up in one house as in a sheep-fold. The executioner went, and bringing out one of them, covered his face with a napkin, led him out to a field near the house, and making him kneel down, cut his throat with a knife. Then taking off the bloody napkin, he went and brought out another, whom he put to death after the same manner. In this way the whole number, amounting to eighty-eight men, were butchered."* Woe to the men whose religion is thus perverted! and woe to the religion which thus perverts men, stifling the natural emotions of the breast, and turning man into a monster, more cruel to his kind than the beasts that roam in the forest!

While such scenes were transacting at their feet, on their brethren of the same blood and faith, the Vaudois of the Alps could not expect to remain unmolested. In 1560, the troops of Savoy, whose Duke had regained his dominions, led on by the unprincipled La Trinita, were commissioned by the Pope and cardinals to exterminate the inhabitants of the valleys. In vain did they try, by menace and cajolery, to induce these simple mountaineers to make submission to Rome. Reluctant to draw the sword against their native prince, they agreed at first to relinquish their abodes in the valleys, and retreat to the loftiest of their mountains, preferring, under the Divine protection, to encounter the storms and snows of the Alps, rather than embrace the religion, or trust in the mercy, of their

* Reformation in Italy, by Dr M'Crie, p. 305.

enemies. Aged men, women, and children, might be seen carried by their friends, or dragging their feeble limbs to the place of safety. But even there were they followed by their blood-thirsty pursuers. Hemmed in on every side, driven to bay, and provoked beyond endurance by the infamous La Trinita, who violated every treaty, torturing and murdering all who came within his reach, the spirit of the Vaudois was roused, and by a well-sustained guerilla warfare, they repulsed the veteran troops of Savoy, and procured at length a temporary respite.

During the truce that followed, an incident occurred which illustrates the absurd calumnies propagated against this harmless people, by their bigotted persecutors. It was not only alleged that the Vaudois fought with poisoned weapons, and that they used the arts of sorcery, but that nature had stamped the mark of infamy on their offspring,—that their infants were born with black throats, with four rows of teeth, and one eye in the middle of the forehead, like the cyclops. Philip VII., Duke of Savoy, having expressed a desire to see some of their children, to satisfy himself on this point by ocular inspection, twelve infants were brought down to him from the mountains, along with their mothers. On being exhibited to the Duke, he inspected the babes with intense interest, and declared, that "he had never seen prettier children in his life."

The subsequent history of the Vaudois presents little more than a repetition of the scenes we have attempted to describe, more or less melancholy and disastrous. In this respect it differs considerably from the history of our native country, which has its periods of sunshine as well as storm, and which, even in the darkest of its persecutions, exhibits some redeeming traits of

happiness, and even of humour. The history of the Waldenses may be read in tears, may be heard with sighs; but it can never, by any chance, awaken a smile. Another dissimilarity must have struck you, in the wholesale character of the martyrdoms of the Alps. In Scotland we had our single martyrs, our Wisharts and Hamiltons under Popery—our Argyles and Camerons under Prelacy—whose individual sufferings, and specific testimonies, even in the very words they uttered, have been embalmed in our martyrologies. The Vaudois, again, were offered up in hecatombs, and few particular cases have been left on record. Their executioners were whole armies; the scaffolds on which they bled, were their own snow-clad mountains; and as "there was none to bury their dead bodies," there was none to transmit their dying testimonies. How true, as well as beautiful the lines of our own Milton, whose muse was inspired by the distant report of their sufferings:

"Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold:
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones,
Forget not; in thy book record their groans,
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold,
Slain by the bloody Piedmontese that rolled,
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heaven. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple tyrant; that from these may grow
An hundred others, who having learnt thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe!"

A few examples, however, of individual suffering have reached us, and one of these, which took place in

the beginning of the seventeenth century, we may briefly notice. Bartholomew Copin was a Vaudois merchant in the valley of Lucerne, and had come in the way of his business to the fair of Aost. When at supper with some other merchants, one of the company began to inveigh, in the most insulting terms, against the inhabitants of the valleys. Copin, provoked at his insolence, spoke up in their defence. "What!" said the reviler, "are you a Vaudois?" He acknowledged he was. "And do you not believe that God is in the host?" "No," said Copin. "Faugh!" replied the other. "What a farce of a religion is yours!" "My religion," said Copin, "is as true as that there is a God, and as sure as death." The next day he was summoned before the Bishop of Aost, who told him that he must confess his crime or suffer for it. The honest merchant refused to acknowledge any fault. He had some property, he said, with a wife and children, but he would sacrifice all for a good conscience. He pled, too, that he had not violated any civil law. The bishop, however, would hear of nothing but submission. He was thrown into prison; there he was visited by an inquisitor, who tried him first with honied speeches, but finding him obdurate, ended with curses. "Begone, thou cursed Lutheran," cried the enraged monk; "thou shalt go to the devil, and when tormented by unclean spirits, thou shalt repent of thy obstinacy, in choosing to go to hell, rather than be reconciled to holy mother church." "It is a long time now," said Copin, "since I was reconciled to the holy Church." To subdue his fortitude, his wife and son were permitted to see and sup with him in prison; but he spent the time in reconciling them to their approaching loss; and having blessed his son, he took an affecting farewell

of his wife, exhorting them to live in the fear of God. Their cries and tears, on leaving him in the prison, were enough to melt a heart of stone. But Copin withstood the temptation. "My dearest companion," he wrote to his wife, "I received much consolation from your visit. I feel persuaded we shall never meet together again. May God comfort you and bless you. Be not concerned about me; for if it please God that I have reached the end of my days, and that I now render back the soul he has lent me so long, I trust he will receive it into heaven, through his Divine mercy, for the love of his holy Son, Jesus Christ, through whose holy death and passion I believe that our sins are washed away." One morning, sometime afterwards, the body of the martyr was found strangled in prison, lest his confession and constancy should be publicly known, and thereafter it was dragged from the dungeon, and committed to the flames.*

At length, in the year 1655, the implacable enemies of the Vaudois gained the object after which they had been striving for centuries—the expulsion of this primitive race of witnesses from the Valleys. In that fatal year, which bears the blackest mark, even in the dark calendar of this oppressed Church, the Duke of Savoy, under the instigation of the court of Rome, and among other reasons to make room for the Irish Papists who had been banished by Cromwell for their atrocities during the rebellion,† lent himself to a scene of atrocity which has hardly its parallel in the history of civilized nations. By an order issued by Gastaldo, the legate, all of the reformed religion were

* Perrin, 177–183.
† Leger, part ii. chap. vii.

ordered to withdraw from and abandon their native valleys, within the space of three days, under the pain of death and confiscation, unless they became Roman Catholics. The hardship of such an order, issued in the midst of winter, when the ground was covered with snow, may be easily conceived. We shall not attempt to describe the distress and consternation into which the poor people were thrown, when old and young, the blind and bed-rid, the sick and dying, betook themselves to their retreats on the mountains, and prepared for their melancholy departure. Nor shall we attempt to sketch the misery and devastation that followed,—"a story," says honest Morland, "so lined and interwoven with horrible attempts, such bloody edicts, such profound stratagems, and barbarous persecutions,—whole families miserably ruined, and the innocent blood of the saints poured out as water on the ground,—insomuch that my spirit has often waxed cold within me, and my heart even failed me, yea, my very hand has trembled, as with a fit of palsy, in the writing thereof." The barbarities inflicted by the savage soldiery, on the unfortunate people who fell into their hands, are too fearful for description. The ears of men in the nineteenth century have become too delicate to hear what the hands of men were found capable of perpetrating at the time to which we refer. And I can only darkly insinuate, that the operations of the butcher on the carcase, and of the anatomist on the corpse, combined with those of the miner in exploding his quarry, and, I may add, the cannibal on the shores of Africa, convey a dim idea of the atrocities committed on the living bodies of the poor Vaudois. The cry of their oppression rung through Europe, and met with a response in every Protestant

bosom. To his eternal honour as a man, and as the ruler of a Protestant country, Oliver Cromwell protested, on hearing the sad tale, that "it lay as near, to rather nearer, his heart, than if it had concerned his nearest and dearest relations in the world."* He immediately dispatched Sir Samuel Morland as his ambassador to the courts of France and Turin, to remonstrate against the bloody policy which they were pursuing towards a people whom he regarded as his brethren in the faith; and not obscurely intimated that, if the persecutions were not arrested, he would make common cause with the sufferers. Not content with this, he sent letters to all the Protestant states, inviting them to join in the interposition; and a collection was ordered throughout England in behalf of the sufferers, which speedily amounted to nearly L.40,000. Never was the voice of Old England heard in a juster and holier quarrel. It does one's heart good to see how the craven spirits of the persecutors quailed, and how they apologised and slunk back from their bloody work, before the noble remonstrance of the blunt soldier of the commonwealth. Cromwell, however, died; the treaty which he procured in the favour of the Vaudois was violated; they were at last driven from their valleys, and the miserable remains of them were obliged to betake themselves for shelter to the cantons of Switzerland. For upwards of twenty years, during what may be considered the dark age of Protestantism, when the Huguenots of France, and the covenanters of Scotland, were passing through the furnace of persecution, the ancient valleys of the Vaudois were desolate and deserted; the incense of praise and prayer no longer

* Morland, 552.

ascended; and nothing was heard save the blasphemies of their invaders, echoed by the scream of the mountain eagle, as he rose scared from feeding on the bloody and bleached remains of the slaughtered saints.

But Providence had determined that these valleys should be re-peopled with their ancient inhabitants. We can only advert to one of the most remarkable scenes in the annals of Protestantism,—the glorious return of the Vaudois to their native mountains, under the chieftainship of their noble-minded pastor, Henri Arnaud. In August 1689,—a year remarkable for the deliverance of our own country from Popish tyranny—Arnaud, after a day spent in fasting and prayer for the Divine help, set out from Switzerland with between eight and nine hundred of his banished countrymen. Never was the hand of Providence more visible in any expedition of the same nature. Boats seemed to be kept ready waiting to convey them over rivers—battalions of armed men opened up a passage for them—the darkness of night and the light of day seemed alike to favour them—and the heavens seemed prepared either to hurl its hail and lightning in the face of their foes, or to cast a mantle of mist around the little band, to favour their escape. Day after day were they hunted from mountain to mountain, dealing destruction on their opponents; and when at last, before a tremendous host and train of artillery, their last retreat was demolished, "Retreat we must, my brave friends," exclaimed Arnaud, "though our road should lie over ravine and precipice. Better far to meet death, shattered on the rocks, than surrender our bodies to infamy and death in the hands of our enemies." "See," he continued, pointing to a cloud of mist which came at that moment rolling down the val-

ley; "see how the hand of Jehovah is, in this hour of our extremity, outstretched to save us." It was even so. Enveloped in its sable curtain, they were enabled, by sliding and catching at projections, to descend the frightful precipice undiscovered. Next morning, when the enemy arrived at the post they had occupied, expecting an easy and full revenge, they found it deserted, and saw the undaunted mountaineers high above them on another of the Alps, and far beyond their reach.

Of these brave and devoted men, the present Waldenses are the descendants. They would soon, to all human appearance, have been crushed, had not Providence again stirred up the Protestant states to aid them. They found efficient friends in the persons of King William, and his pious queen, Mary, who founded a royal subsidy for their support, which in the reign of George III., was converted into a national grant. During the last century, repeated attempts have been made to expel or exterminate them, which have been providentially thwarted; and nothing affords a clearer proof of the inextinguishable hatred borne towards them by their Popish neighbours, than the fact, that one of the basest of these attempts was discovered, when on the eve of being executed by agents of the Sardinian government, shortly after the French Revolution, although the Waldenses proved so strictly loyal to the king of Sardinia, that they refused to submit to the conquering arms of Napoleon, and fought in the ranks of their ungrateful prince, until he was compelled to surrender. But though thus saved from extinction, they have been strictly confined, since the beginning of last century, to three of their valleys, Lucerne, Perouse, and St Martin. Every means which legal tyranny and jesuitical chicanery can devise, have been used to de-

grade and depress them; and at this moment they are almost as dependant on the sympathy and succour of their Protestant friends in more favoured lands, as when they were suffering from the fire and sword of persecution.

Next to the miraculous preservation of the Jews, the continuance of this little Church in the very heart and centre of Popery, may be regarded as one of the most striking of the standing miracles which confirm our holy faith. Surely Divine Providence must have some great end to fulfil by the instrumentality of a Church which he has so wonderfully preserved. It is not presumptuous, we trust, to conclude, that it may have been preserved as an agent for diffusing the light of the gospel through poor benighted Italy, and thus, by supporting it, we may be lending a hand to the overthrow of that system of superstition and tyranny which has there so long held its seat. Let it be hoped, that the final effort which that system is now making to regain all, and more than all, its past ascendancy, may have the blessed effect of uniting all the sections of the Protestant Church together, and that the descendants of those who have suffered under her dominion, may meet to hold their jubilee over her downfall, according to the promise, "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her."

APPENDIX.

NATIONAL TREATIES IN FAVOUR OF THE VAUDOIS.

The following extracts from a letter sent to the Earl of Aberdeen, by the Rev. Mr Gilly, will show that national treaties are in existence, binding the court of Sardinia to leave the Vaudois in the uninterrupted enjoyment of their religious and civil privileges, and pledging the honour of England to see them maintained.

"The fruit of this mediation, on the part of the English government in 1665, was a solemn compact signed by the Duke of Savoy, in favour of his Vaudois subjects, and guaranteed by the ambassador of the king of France, and the ambassadors of the Reformed Cantons of Switzerland. But the compact was soon violated, and in answer to a letter from the Swiss Cantons to Charles II. about the year 1666, requesting his majesty's interference, the king promised, 'We will from our heart do all we can towards the preservation and safety of those who are so closely united to us by the sacred ties of a common faith.' There is every reason to believe that the promised intercession of Charles II. was but feeble; for at this crisis there commenced a system of more effectual persecution, which continued to deprive the Vaudois of their lands and property, to confine

one populous valley was wrested from the Protestants, and the inhabitants were compelled to abjure their faith, during the period of this inertness; but in the midst of the evil, the argument which I am humbly using with your lordship, (namely, that there are ample grounds and precedents for interposition by virtue of treaties,) derives strength from the language and conduct of the British minister, Mr Hedges, at the court of Turin. He strongly protested against the infraction of treaties, and he wrote repeated letters to his own government, imploring them to be more in earnest, to instruct him to insist upon the observance of engagements with the Vaudois, and pledging himself that it only required to be in earnest to carry the point.

" The following extracts from the despatches of Mr Hedges, in 1727, are so much to the purpose, and so applicable to the present state of things, that I trust your lordship will pardon my troubling you with them.

" ' I believe, if the Marquis d'Aix, (Sardinian envoy in London,) perceived an earnestness in England of having this affair remedied, it would very much facilitate it.' June 21, 1727.

" ' I cannot but be of opinion, that one great reason of the coldness I meet with here on those subjects, arises chiefly from the little warmth with which it is urged to the Marquis d'Aix, at London, and as they are points by no ways agreeable to the king of Sardinia, I do not doubt but he informs his master that we have them not so much at heart, as to oblige him to make many alterations in either case. For the treaties are so express with regard to the Protestants, that they cannot possibly have any thing to say in defence of their present behaviour to them.' August 23, 1727.

" ' The Marquis de St Thomas owned to me the hardships that the inhabitants of those valleys laboured under; but pleaded in excuse, that they were obliged not to suffer the exercise of the Protestant religion in them by the treaty made with France for the cession of those valleys in exchange for the valley of Barcellonette; but, as I had carefully looked over that treaty, and could find in it no one word relating to the not suffering the Protestant religion, but, on the contrary, it appeared to me, as your Grace will see by a copy of the article enclosed,

them within more narrow limits, and greatly to reduce their numbers. This oppression became more and more severe, until the non-interference of the English government under James II., and the revocation of the edict of Nantes in France, gave the Duke of Savoy an opportunity of making a new attempt to exterminate the Vaudois. The greater part of their population was massacred; and of the remainder, some were obliged to conform to Romanism, and the rest were driven from their habitations. This took place in 1686.

"Within a few years afterwards, the courage and conduct of the Vaudois refugees, who were aided by William III., enabled them to repossess themselves of some part of their ancient settlements, and in 1690, the Waldenses were once more indebted to the English government, and recovered their political existence.

"Your lordship will take some interest in reading the account, which an historian of that day gives of the decisive conduct of the English envoy, who managed the affair. 'The Duke of Savoy granted a very full edict in favour of the Vaudois, restoring their former liberties and privileges to them, which the lord Galway took care to have put in the most emphatical words, and passed with all the formalities of law, to make it as effectual as laws and promises can be; yet every step, that was made in that affair, went against the grain, and was extorted from him by the intercession of the king, and the states, and by the lord Galway's zeal.'

"The same zealous attention to the grievances of the Vaudois was again shown in the secret treaty of Turin, in 1704, between Queen Anne and the Duke of Savoy; and it also appeared in the face of the correspondence between those powers in 1709. In the course of that correspondence, and in a conversation with the ambassador Chetwynd, the duke admitted that he was bound, both by treaties and promises, to give satisfaction to England on this subject.

"Unfortunately for the Waldenses, the administrations, which immediately succeeded, did not watch the execution of these treaties and engagements with sufficient vigilance, or they did not press the question with vigour. It is certain that

that the inhabitants should be maintained inviolably in all their privileges and immunities. I told him I could not possibly imagine it was capable of receiving any such construction. I then told him that I could not but be extremely surprised at the little attention that was shown to His Majesty's intercession, FOUNDED ON SOLEMN TREATIES, which could not possibly be misunderstood.'" August 30, 1727.

LECTURE IV.

On the Present Condition and Future Prospects of the Waldensian Church.

BY THE REV. ROBERT W. STEWART, A.M.,
late of Erskine.

The armorial legend of the Protestant valleys of Piémont, from time immemorial, has been "Lux lucet in tenebris;"* and it contains, remarkably enough, a truthful epitome of their history. Somewhat similar in signification is the motto of Geneva, the model church of the Reformation, "Post tenebras lux,"† and yet in the use of the same words, there is sufficient diversity to establish a striking contrast between a *primitive* and *reformed* church. Though poor and despised by the world, the Vaudois community lays claim to the high prerogative of being called a primitive church. From father to son an unbroken tradition has been handed down among them, which the writings of their enemies have unwittingly confirmed, that the doctrines they maintain were received directly from the apostles; and Henri Arnaud, their renowned pastor-chief, has left

* "The light shineth in darkness."
† "After the darkness light."

on record this testimony concerning them, which has never been denied, "neither has their church been ever reformed, whence arises its title of evangelic."*

Their eventful history during past ages—their earnest "contendings for the faith once delivered to the saints"—the cruel massacres, by which they were repeatedly in danger of being entirely exterminated—and the atrocities, too shocking for detail, perpetrated upon them by a dissolute soldiery, goaded on by the blood-hounds of the Inquisition, have all combined to associate with their name, a vague traditionary interest, more sacred in character, though similar in kind, to that which is awakened by the names of Bruce and Wallace in reading the annals of our own country. Unfortunately for them, as well as for us, this interest on our part, up to the present period, has partaken more of the passive admiration, mingled with regret, which one is apt to indulge over the memory of departed excellence, than of that active sympathy, which calls into exercise immediate and sustained exertion on behalf of brethren still enduring persecution and distress. We have been wont to talk of the Vaudois as a valiant and religious race, who, after holding up the lamp of truth, amid the thick darkness of the middle ages, and "resisting unto blood, striving against sin," merged both their testimony and their existence in the churches of the Reformation, rather than as a living church, still bearing witness to the truth, and suffering in our own times a constant and painful oppression at the hands of "the man of sin, the

* "The Glorious Recovery," by Henri Arnaud, pref. p. 14, edit. Lon., 1827. The original work, in French, dedicated to Queen Anne, is exceedingly rare; not more than eight copies are known to be in existence, and one of these is now deposited in the library of the Free Church College, in Edinburgh.

son of perdition." To this mistaken view of their history, I apprehend, is to be attributed the unenviable position Scotland has, up to a very recent period, occupied, as the only Protestant nation in Europe which has never, *in its national capacity*, contributed towards the alleviation of their poverty and distress. If this be the true cause of the vague sentimentalism so long entertained towards the Vaudois, it has only to be proclaimed upon the house-top, that they are living, witnessing, suffering still, to awaken on their behalf an active and universal sympathy. Amid the deep recesses of the mountain valleys, surrounded by the stupendous precipices, the dark-blue glaciers, and untrodden snow of the everlasting Alps, there exists at this moment a Church, venerable for its antiquity, which reaches back to apostolic times, and lovely for its simplicity and comparative purity,—a Church which, though it waxed small under the iron rod of persecution, has yet outlived the most unheard-of and revolting cruelties, and which during the dark ages, when "all the earth wondered after the beast," was the sole depository of gospel light throughout Europe—a witness prophesying in sackcloth for the truth of God. Such is the evangelic Church of the valleys of Piémont!—nurtured in a sterile soil—compressed within narrow boundaries—composed for the most part of poor unlettered peasants,—yet in it has been treasured up the "salt of the earth," wherewith in days past the kingdoms of the Reformation have been salted; and with which also, so far as man can judge, it seems the purpose of Him "who is wonderful in counsel," that the benighted kingdoms of France and of Italy shall in due time be purified.

Some modern writers have drawn a distinction be-

tween the names *Waldenses* and *Vaudois*, affirming that the latter is the proper appellation of this mountain community, while the former is a Popish term of opprobrium, intended to mark them out as a sect deriving their origin from Peter Waldo, the rich merchant of Lyons. It is certainly true, that Popish writers have called them Waldenses in this sense, against which we find them protesting in some of their public documents; but that is no sufficient reason for the distinction, as the ingenious and erudite Faber,* following Beza, satisfactorily makes out that Peter of Lyons derived his sirname Waldo from these very valleys, of which he was a native, while the name Vallenses (from which Waldenses has been derived) was applied to their inhabitants at least a century before his birth. Their own historian, Leger,† assures us, that the names, *Vallenses*, *Valdesi*, and *Vaudois*, by all of which that people are known, have been derived from the valleys they inhabit, according as the dialect used was that of ancient or modern Italy, or of Gaul. "Those," says he, "who first called the valleys *Vaux*, called its inhabitants *Vaudois*, meaning simply by the name Vaudois, those who dwelt in the Vaux, in the same way that others called them *Valdesi* or *Valdenses*, having regard to the word *Val*, or if you will, to the Latin and Italian words *Vallis* and *Valle*."

At one period, the Vaudois Church extended over a considerable portion of the province of Dauphiné in France, but it has again been reduced within its original limits in the valleys of Piémont, situated between Monte Viso and the Col de Sestriere, at the eastern

* Faber's Vallenses and Albigenses.

† Leger Histoire Gen. des Eglises Vaudoises, p. 17, edit. Leyde, 1669.

base of the Cottian Alps, extending, according to Dr Gilly's estimate, twenty-two miles north and south, and eighteen miles east and west. These valleys are generally said to be three in number, viz., Val Lucerna, through which flows the river Pelice,—Val Perosa, through which flows the river Clusone,—and Val St Martino, watered by the torrent Germanasca; but properly speaking there are *five*, the other two, Val di Rora, and Val d' Angrogna, though both smaller, being far the most celebrated during the struggles for religious freedom in which their inhabitants were engaged, during the fearful massacre of 1655.

On approaching the Vaudois territory from Pinerolo and Bricherasio, the coup d'oeil is varied and most magnificent. To the right, on the top of one of the undulating hills which separate the Val Lucerna from the Val Perosa, lies the commune of Prarustino, with its white church peeping out gracefully at intervals from the forest of chesnut and walnut trees which surround it. This parish, which has two Protestant churches within its bounds, one at St Bartholomeo, and the other at Rocca-piatta, is now the only connecting link between the two Protestant valleys which open from the plains of Piémont; though both Leger and Sir Samuel Morland, in their histories, relate that the inhabitants of Bricherasio, St Secondo, Garciliana, and Osasco, villages situated around its base, were at one time Protestants also. To the left, over the dark mountain-chain which intervenes between Lucerna and the valley of the Po, Monte Viso is seen rising in pyramidal form, crowned with virgin snow, like a watchful sentinel keeping guard over the peaceful valleys beneath. In the back ground, the valley rises abruptly towards the main ridge of the Alps, and the practised

eye can at once discern the altitude, by the varied hues on the mountain side, so peculiar to these Alpine regions,—the bright green of the meadows—the brownish tint of the fruit and forest trees—the sombre shade of the pine forests—and the cold blue tints of the rocky region that intervenes between the line where vegetation ceases and perennial snow begins. The rich and luxuriant vegetation which the immediate foreground displays, relieves the scene. Every inch of ground that can be brought under cultivation, has been occupied, and every rocky eminence where the spade or plough are useless, is covered with fruit trees. The vines are planted in rows between ridges of wheat, maize, potatoes and hemp, and hang in most graceful festoons along the rude trellis-work which supports them, while the wood-built *chalets* of the poor but brave peasantry, appear to great advantage half hid amidst the profusion of chesnut, mulberry, and walnut trees, which clothe the hills on either side. It is impossible to view the hamlets ranged one above another, on the steep mountain side, without being convinced that these valleys are too densely populated, and that wretchedness and misery—notwithstanding the fertility of the soil, must be the consequence of the despotic edict which imprisons them, on account of their religion, within a territory far too strait for them.

In a region where there is scarcely a vineyard or a meadow that has not been the scene of warfare and of horrible atrocity,—scarcely a precipice in that land of precipices, which has not associated with it a tale of infamy and blood,—scarcely a mountain pass in that land of mountains, that has not proved a new Thermopylæ, nor a torrent whose waters have not been dyed with the blood of martyrs, it would be no easy matter,

even if this were a fitting occasion, to describe the places most celebrated in Waldensian history. The crag of Castelluzzo which frowns above the hamlet of St Marguerita, in the Val Lucerna, still proclaims the slaughter of the innocents who were precipitated from its summit to the plain below. Rora is celebrated to this day for the martial achievements of its hero Gianovello, as also the Balceglia in Val St Martino, for the memorable defence of the intrepid Arnaud and his followers; while the Val d' Angrogna is at once famed for its *Barricade*, behind which the Vaudois defied all the efforts of their enemies; and for its College at the Pra del Tor, where their *Barbes** in ancient times gathered around them not only the students of the valleys, but those of Bohemia and Calabria also, who sought ordination at their hands. I would recommend those who desire to become better acquainted with these localities to consult the very interesting works of Dr Gilly of Durham,† who was the first, of late years, to revive in this country an interest in the Vaudois; and of Dr Henderson of Highbury,‡ whom I met in the valleys last summer,—the latter of which was published so recently as the beginning of the present year. There is a spot, however, in Val Perosa, which particularly fixed my attention, on account of the solemnity of the event that occurred there, and as I have not seen any notice taken of it in the records of preceding travellers, I hope I shall be excused for shortly adverting to it. A few miles above

* Literally *Uncles*.—The name anciently given to their Pastors.

† Narrative of an Excursion to the Mountains of Piedmont, by the Rev. Wm. Stephen Gilly, M.A. London: 1824. And Waldensian Researches by the same author. London: 1831.

‡ The Vaudois, by E. Henderson, D.D. London; 1845.

the village of St Germano, and in the same parish, there is a place called Pinache d' Envers. It is by no means remarkable for the beauty of its scenery,—the meadows are not interspersed, as on the other side of the Clusone, with vineyards and orchards, because after mid-day the sun's rays are intercepted by the heights which tower above it; and the dark pine forest that bristles to the mountain top, adds a feature of sternness to the landscape, and sheds around an air of profound melancholy. Here during the months that elapsed ere the treaty of Pinerolo was signed, after the bloody massacre of 1655, the Vaudois remnant met Sabbath after Sabbath to worship God under the open canopy of heaven. On one of these occasions, two of their ministers, Peter Gros and Francis Aguit, who, while prisoners at Turin, had abjured their religion under the torture of the rack, appeared before the weeping congregation to confess their sin, and to " testify their extreme sorrow for their defection, through infirmity, from the true religion." How humiliating to them must have been the thought, that while they had fallen in the day of trial, many from among their unlettered flocks had kept the faith amidst sorer temptations, and had endured the martyr's death rather than " remove their integrity from them." Morland has preserved their declaration; the last sentence of which is as follows, " We recant whatsoever we may have pronounced to the prejudice of the Evangelical truth, and promise for the future, through the grace of God, to persevere in the profession of the reformed religion to the last moment of our life; and rather to suffer death and torments, than to renounce that holy doctrine which is taught in our church according to the word of God; even as we swear and promise, with our bended knees upon the

earth, and our hands lifted up to the eternal, our Almighty God and Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. As we desire His assistance to do this, even so help us God. Amen."*

It may be proper here to give an outline of the constitution of this mountain Church. Of late I have often had the question put to me, "Is the form of Church government among the Waldenses episcopal, and do they hold the modern notions of Apostolical succession?" The doctrine of Apostolical succession is strongly held by the Vaudois Church, but in a sense very different indeed from that which many attach to it in the southern part of this island. If "the fruits of the Spirit" manifest themselves in the labours of those who have been put in charge of the ministry, the idea of attaching weight to the question whether ordination has been transmitted to them in an unbroken line from the Apostles, appears too childish to be for a moment entertained. They believe, to use the words of their confession, "That it is necessary that the Church should have ministers, known by those who are employed for that purpose, to be learned, and of good life, as well to preach the word of God, as to administer the sacraments;" but they also believe that the doctrines and ordinances of the gospel are not made effectual by any virtue in him that administers them, but only through the blessing of God, and the effectual operation of his Spirit in those who by faith receive them. They claim an apostolical succession, because they now hold and teach those very doctrines, which from time immemorial their forefathers handed down to them as the

* History of the Evangelical Churches of Piedmont, by Sir Samuel Morland. Book ii. Chap. 3. p. 279.

doctrines of the Apostles, and for the maintenance of which they bled and died.

So far as I know, almost every traveller who has visited that region of late years, bears testimony that the constitution of the Evangelical Church of the valleys is in all material points a *fac-simile* of our own. "The constitution of the Vaudois Church," says Dr Henderson, "comes nearer to the Presbyterian than to any other form of ecclesiastical polity now in existence;" and even Dr Gilly, while labouring to prove that their ancient constitution was episcopal, records the fact, that, "their discipline is now presbyterian, very much resembling that of the Church of Scotland." If the episcopal form of church government ever obtained among them, it is very certain that all knowledge of the fact has now disappeared from the valleys, a circumstance exceedingly strange, and unlikely, when we call to remembrance with what scrupulous care they have ever guarded against all innovations, and have handed down as a precious heir-loom from father to son, the tradition above referred to. The grounds on which this assertion rests, do not appear sufficient to support it. It is maintained that the change from episcopacy to Presbytery took place about the year 1630, when the clergy who came from France and Switzerland to replace their own pastors, who, with the exception of two, had all been cut off by the plague, introduced the form of church government to which they had been accustomed in their own countries. It seems very unlikely indeed, that a mere handful of strangers should have influence enough to effect a change so much in opposition to all the feelings and prejudices of the people; and though Leger speaks of some slight relaxation in discipline, as occurring in consequence of their arrival,

he never hints at any thing like an organic change, though had such taken place, he must have been cognizant of it. But surely the advocates of episcopacy must have entirely overlooked the fact, that one of the ancient manuscripts deposited by Sir Samuel Morland in the University of Cambridge, bearing date 1587, speaks of a church government by kirk-sessions and synods, as having already existed among them for *some hundred years.** This is surely sufficient evidence to prove that if episcopacy had any existence amongst them at all, it must have been centuries previous to the irruption of French clergy into the valleys, in 1630. Another argument in favour of episcopacy, has been attempted to be drawn from the mention of *Bishops*, made in some Waldensian manuscripts. Unfortunately for its conclusiveness, however, the term never occurs in the *singular* but always in the *plural* number, in conjunction with the term *pastors*, and hence, if it proves any thing at all, it proves too much for their purpose, because if episcopacy ever did exist among them, they could not have had more than a single bishop, and even he must have enjoyed a comfortable sinecure, with so small a diocese. In the second article of the ancient discipline of the Evangelical Church of Piedmont, "concerning pastors or ministers," the following passage occurs; "Among the powers which God hath given to his servants, as belong to their station, is

* "The Italian manuscript, the original whereof is to be seen with the rest in the University of Cambridge, bearing date 1587, tells us that this council (Synod) was constantly held in the month of September, and that some hundred years ago, there were seen assembled together in one Synod held at Valone del Lauso, in Val Clusone, no less than 140 Barbes. The same MS. adds that they had always their *Consistoires*." Morland's Hist. p. 183.

the election of *Rulers of the people*, and *Priests in the offices*, according to the diversity of operation, with the unity of Christ, which is proved by what the apostle says, Titus i., "I left thee in Crete that thou mightest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city." The words denoting Rulers and Priests, in the Waldensian dialect are "*regidors*," and "*preires*," and on the strength of these, Episcopacy again claims ancient jurisdiction over the valleys. On this passage Dr Henderson admirably remarks,—"Whatever difference may have been designed to be expressed between "*regidors*," and "*preires*," the passage alleged from Titus sanctions the ordination of none but πρεσβυτερους, *presbyters* or *elders*, so that if it had any force, as adduced in proof, it could only be regarded as descriptive of the two-fold view of the same office, viz. ruling and teaching. At all events the term *regidor* cannot be considered as equivalent to bishop, inasmuch as the subjects of rule are expressly said to be the people, not the presbyters." But, farther, we have the testimony of Reinerus Sacco, an apostate Waldensian barbe, and afterwards a Jacobin inquisitor, that neither prelatic titles, nor episcopal authority, were recognised among the Vaudois so far back as the 13th century. In the year 1254 he wrote a treatise against them, in which he assures us, that among other "blasphemies" uttered by them, they affirm, "that prelatic names, such as pope, bishop, and the like, are to be reprobated; that obedience has to be given, not to the prelates, but to God; *that no man is greater than another in the Church, "for all ye are brethren.*"'"* In another passage he describes

* Reinerus Sacco in Blair's Hist. of Waldenses. Vol. i. p. 460.

their chief pastor and his associates, in such a way as to leave no doubt that the ecclesiastical authority was then vested in an executive board, similarly constituted, with "The Table" of the present day. "They had a chief bishop among them, who had always two attending him, the one whereof he called his eldest, and the other his youngest son, and beside these two, he had also a third, that followed him in the quality of a deacon."* Who can fail to trace in this description, the moderator, the moderator adjunct, the secretary, and the deacon, who conjointly conduct the business of the Vaudois Church, during the intervals which elapse between the meetings of Synod?

During my first visit to the valleys in 1842, I learned that an attempt had been made in certain influential quarters to alter their present form of Church government for a modified episcopacy, by introducing a bishop under the title of *perpetual moderator*,—who should hold no cure of souls, but give his attention entirely to the management of the affairs of the Church, and be the organ of official communication with the government. The overtures on this subject were very coldly received in the valleys, for the clergy and the laity were alike opposed to the plan. One of their clergy, in speaking of the matter, said to me, "even if it had found favour with the clergy, it never would have been adopted, because the elders have a majority of two to one over the clergy in our Synod, and they never would have submitted to it." Another said, "it cannot be proved that bishops ever did exist in the Vaudois Church, and even if it could, we never would return to episcopacy, as it is not suitable to our present

* Rein, in Morland's Hist. p. 178.

circumstances." The present moderator, M. Bonjour, a man well qualified by his piety and judgment for the situation he holds, is decidedly opposed to any such change, though the effect of it in all probability would be to confirm him in the moderatorship for life. The following curious conversation on this subject took place between the Minister of the Interior and him in July last, on the occasion of his presenting the prospectus of business for the approaching synod: *Minister*, "I hear that you are about to apply to his Majesty for leave to sanction the appointment of a Protestant bishop over your Church, but I advise you not to do so, as your request will certainly be refused." *Moderator*, "You know that proposition was not so well received at the last meeting of synod, so you need entertain no apprehensions; and, besides, it is altogether Catholic, and inconsistent with Protestantism." *Minister*, "Well, I have told you this as a friend, because if you apply, I know it will not be granted. If you had a Protestant bishop, the Catholic bishops and he would be continually fighting, and the government has other things to do than to attend to their quarrels."

It cannot be expected that the same number of Church courts should be maintained at present, while there are only *fifteen* parishes and *sixteen* regular pastors, as were found among them in the brighter days of Vaudois history, when the number of their Barbes was not less than one hundred and forty, and when the inhabitants of Val Pragel, and a part of the marquisate of Saluzzo, belonged to their Church. It would be obviously absurd for the same individuals to meet at one time as a presbytery, at another as a synod, and at a third as a general assembly, but they have retained all that was requisite, in their peculiar circumstances, to

prove them presbyterians, viz., the consistoire, or kirk-session, as a local court in each parish, and the synod as a court of review.

The CONSISTOIRE is composed of the pastor, who is moderator; of the elders, who are elected by a vote of the heads of families in their respective quarters; and of a deacon, whose office it is to attend to the repairs of the temple, and to relieve the poor. In the Book of Discipline for the Evangelical Church of the valleys, adopted by the Synod in 1839, we are told that "the *Consistoires* are charged with the administration of poors' money, the election of regents or schoolmasters, the surveillance of schools, the maintenance of good morals, and the advancement of the temporal and spiritual interests of their parishes." The qualifications requisite in the candidate for the eldership are, that he is not under twenty-nine years of age, that he does not keep a tavern, that he is able to read and write with ease, that he receives no support from the poors' fund, and that he does not stand in the relation of father, son, or brother to any one already a member of the same consistoire.

The SYNOD is the representative assembly of the Vaudois Church, and is composed of all the pastors and ministers who are, or have been, employed in her service,—of two lay members from each parish, having only one vote between them, and of the two laymen who were members of the last Table. In ancient times this court met every year in the month of September, but now it only meets once every five years, partly on account of the smaller amount of business requiring to be transacted, but chiefly on account of the great expense incurred in procuring letters patent from government, (amounting to L.50), without which a synod is

not permitted to be held. After sermon by a Pastor, appointed at last synod for the purpose, the moderator opens the meeting by prayer, and after the commissions of deputies have been received, the order of business proceeds as follows:—1st, The reading of the royal patent; 2d, The settlement of vacant parishes; 3d, The report of the Table's proceedings since last meeting; and, lastly, The election by ballot of a new commission. The Table are bound to send in a list of subjects to be brought before the synod, to the minister of the interior, for the information of government, at least a month before the meeting of that court. The Intendant of Pinerolo, with his secretary, is present, to watch all their deliberations, and to take care that nothing is enacted which may be prejudicial to his Majesty's government; but, like her Majesty's commissioner in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, he can take no part in their proceedings. They are compelled to hold their sederunts with closed doors, and not only are strangers from other countries excluded, but the population and office-bearers of the valleys also, with the exception of those who have been elected deputies. The acts passed at one synod are not adopted as the laws of the Church, until they have been confirmed by the succeeding one. The deliberations of the synod excite deep interest throughout the entire population; and it is therefore part of the secretary's duty, within fifteen days after the rising of that court, to transmit a copy of its acts and proceedings to every parish, which the pastor is bound to read to his flock from his pulpit, and afterwards to deposit among the records of the consistoire.

In addition to these two courts, there is also an executive board, called "La Table," to which allusion has

already been made, corresponding exactly in its functions with our Commission of Assembly. It is composed of three clergymen, the moderator, the moderator adjunct, and the secretary, and of two laymen, who are members of synod. According to the Book of Discipline, "the Table is charged with the execution of all the laws and regulations in force in the Vaudois Church. It has the right of inspection and surveillance over the temporal and spiritual administration of the parishes and their office-bearers. It conducts all the correspondence which affects the interests of the parishes both within and without the kingdom. It settles all disputes which may be brought before it, and distributes the sums transmitted from abroad. It is also charged with the examination of schools, and of bursars, the superintendence of students, the ordination of candidates for the ministry, the inspection of the Vaudois hospitals, and the presbyterial visitation once in five years of all the parishes in the bounds."*

Such is the constitution of the Vaudois Church at the present moment; but there was a time when the regular gradation of kirk-session, presbytery, and synod was found among them. The presbytery was called by them the *Colloque* or *Class*, the latter being the very name still in use in the Dutch Church; and Leger and Morland inform us, that previous to the year 1655, there were two of these in the valleys. "Before the late horrible dispersion of these poor Protestants in the year 1655," says the latter, "there were in the said valleys, which were peopled with Waldenses, fourteen churches, which composed two classes or colloques, and these two classes one synod. The one of these was

* "La Discipline de l'Eglise Evangelique des Vallees Vaudoises du Piedmont." 1839. Unpublished.

called 'the Colloque of Val Lucerna,' comprising the churches of San Giovanni, La Torre, Villaro, Bobio, Rorata, Angrogna, and Roccapiatta; the other colloque, which was called 'the Colloque of Val Perosa and St Martino,' contained the other seven, viz., St Germano, Pinachia, La Cappella, Pramol, Villa-secca, Maneglia, and Prali."*

In the Vaudois church, as in all the other Protestant churches of the continent, there is no class of men to be found corresponding to the probationers in our own churches. So soon as a student has finished his course of study at a university, or theological academy, he is examined, and, if found qualified, at once ordained to the office of the holy ministry.† Formerly the Vaudois students were ordained at Geneva, or wherever they had completed their studies, but on the wise suggestion of Dr Gilly, this system has been discontinued,—the Vaudois church has resumed the ordination of its own ministers, and none can now hold office in it who have been ordained elsewhere. The ceremony of ordination takes place only once a-year in the valleys, and every candidate, before receiving the imposition of hands, is obliged to sign the Confession of Faith. The only distinction with us, in ecclesiastical orders, is made between a *preacher* and a *minister;* with them, however, the distinction lies between the *pastor* and the *minister*,—the former alone having the cure of souls. The election of a pastor to a vacant church is vested in the heads of families, and is conducted by ballot, after which, the Consistoire address a call to the person elected, in name of the con-

* Morland's Hist. p. 4. Leger Hist. Gen. les Egh. Vaun. p. 10.

† See Appendix, No. I.

gregation. Their choice is somewhat trammelled, however, by the following regulation laid down in the Book of Discipline. All the parishes in the valleys are divided into two classes. The first class contains the four parishes of Maneglia, Macel, Rodoretto, and Prali, while all the rest pertain to the second class. None but young men are eligible to parishes of the first class, on account of the physical energy required for the discharge of the pastoral duties in those mountain regions. But a young *minister* cannot be elected to a vacant charge of the second class, until it has been offered in turn to each of the four *pastors* of the first class, according to seniority, and been refused by them. The induction of the pastor into his charge takes place upon a Sabbath, one of his brethren officiating on the occasion, by appointment of the Table. The election and ordination of elders is conducted very much after the mode observed in this country.*

Besides the presbytère, or manse, with its little plot of garden ground, each pastor is paid 500 francs annually, from government;—at least, the government has laid on each commune a tax of 500 francs, for the support of its own minister, which is raised by the municipal council along with other taxes, and paid at once into his hands without passing through the public treasury. The sums annually distributed among them from Holland, and from King William and Mary's fund in this country, (restored to them in 1827 through Dr Gilly's unwearied exertions), when added to the government allowance, produce an income varying from 1300 francs to 1500 francs,—the latter sum being about equal to L.60 sterling. When it was announced

* See Appendix, No. II.

to the pastors (at that time thirteen in number) that the British pension, so long withheld, amounting to L.277 annually, was about to be restored, they unanimously resolved, with a self-denial that did them credit, to appropriate only a part of it to the augmentation of their own stipends, devoting the rest to the establishment of a fund for widows of deceased pastors, and for the support of two suffragan-pastors to be stationed in the parishes of Macel, and Rodoretto, the churches of which had been closed for upwards of 200 years, from want of funds. The latest accounts from the valleys brought the melancholy intelligence, that M. Buffa, the pastor of Rodoretto, and his whole family, had been destroyed about two months ago by an avalanche of snow, which swept away the presbytère in its impetuous course.

In 1827 an arrangement was entered into between the Vaudois Table, and the three Protestant ambassadors* at Turin, to have a minister from the valleys, appointed as chaplain to them conjointly. His stipend is paid by the ambassadors, each contributing towards it 1000 francs annually. He officiates in a chapel attached to the Prussian ambassador's house, and as the service is conducted in French, it is of incalculable benefit to the poor Vaudois servants, and others, residing in the capital, who were entirely deprived of ordinances till this admirable arrangement was effected, chiefly through the zeal of their late lamented benefactor, the Count Waldburg Truchsess, Prussian ambassador at the court of Sardinia. The present moderator, M. Bonjour, was the first who filled the office of "pasteur-chapelain," and on his translation to the parish of San Ger-

* British, Prussian, and Dutch.

mano, the present chaplain, M. Amédée Bert, was elected by the ambassadors to succeed him. I had the pleasure of attending public worship on one occasion in the chapel, and was delighted to find a congregation of about 200 persons present.

The use of a liturgy by the ancient Vaudois church rests on better evidence than that which is brought forward to establish its episcopacy. There is reference made to it in several of their ancient documents; Morland has preserved a fragment of it in his history, and I have seen in the public library at Geneva a duodecimo volume in which it is said to be preserved entire, though I had not an opportunity of examining it, as it is very carefully kept under lock and key. Until lately, the clergy made use of the liturgies of the Swiss churches,—each, according to his liking, officiating from the service-book of Geneva, of Lausanne, or Neuchâtel, but if a liturgy was to be retained at all, they are certainly under obligations to Dr Gilly for his suggestion, that a service-book of their own should be compiled from these, and adopted in all their churches.

A liturgy of this sort was accordingly prepared,—it received the sanction of the synod in 1839, and is now used in every parish of the valleys. Besides prayers for public and family worship, it contains a burial service, (before unknown in the valleys,) the formularies for the ordination of pastors, and elders, and the confession of faith 1655, which the synod of 1839 has adopted, "as the truest compend, and most pure interpretation, of the fundamental doctrines of the Bible."* This liturgy, however, is not intended, and does not actually supersede, the use of extempore prayer; and so far

* See Appendix, No. III.

from being used by the people for the purpose of taking part in public worship by "audible responses," as in the Church of England, it is intended only for the use of the clergy, and resembles the "Directory for Public Worship," bound up with our Confession of Faith, or rather, "John Knox's Liturgy," prepared for the use of the newly reformed Scottish Church. When calling last summer, along with my friend Dr Henderson, on Madame Bert, an English lady, who, though domiciled in the valleys, still retains her early leanings towards episcopacy, the conversation turned on the use of the liturgy. She informed us, that when the cheap edition of it, published in 1842 at Lausanne, for the use of the common people, was introduced into the valleys, *they would not use it*,—that for a while she brought her copy to church, and used it during the service, but at length she was glad to give it up, as they stared at her with astonishment, remarking very naïvely, by way of excuse, "Poor thing, she does not yet understand French sufficiently, to follow the prayers without a book!"

The office of READER is still retained, and its functions are discharged by the schoolmaster, who, during the assembling of the congregation, reads a portion of the Bible, with Osterwald's Reflections on it. He ceases when the pastor enters the pulpit, and the service proceeds in the following order:—singing, prayer from the liturgy, reading a portion of Scripture, an extempore prayer, another psalm, and a sermon, after which follows a second prayer from the liturgy, a psalm, and the apostolic benediction. The organ is not used in the churches of the valleys, more, I apprehend, from want of means, than of inclination, as it is used in all the Presbyterian Churches on the continent, and the

church of La Torre had one within the last 20 years. There used formerly to be only one service in each parish church on Sabbath morning, the afternoon being devoted to catechetical instruction; but now that Sabbath schools are being introduced, the younger and more zealous clergy have adopted a second service. The pastor is obliged to preach extempore; he is not allowed the assistance even of notes, and the practice of reading would not be tolerated for a moment.

Baptism is always administered during public worship, except in cases of severe illness, and it is refused to the children of those who are not members of the church. Godfathers and godmothers take part in the ceremony, as well as the parents. The Lord's Supper is dispensed *eight* times a-year in their churches, viz. on Christmas Day, and on the preceding Sabbath; on Easter, and on the preceding Sabbath; on Whitsunday, and on the preceding Sabbath; and on the two first Sabbaths of September. The young communicants are admitted after a long course of instruction, which they call Confirmation. The ordinance is dispensed in the same way as in the Swiss Churches. The service begins, as amongst ourselves, by reading the words of institution, from 1 Cor. xi., and fencing the tables. The minister first communicates, then the elders, after which the congregation pass before the table in single file, the men first, and afterwards the women,—they partake of the elements *standing*, and then return in the same order to their pews.

It must be confessed, that owing to laxity of discipline among them, many are admitted to the Lord's table, who have no title to be there. The Consistoire, though it has the power of suspension and excommunication, seems to exercise no authority in keeping back

unworthy communicants; and after a solemn warning addressed from the pulpit to intending communicants, every man is left to follow the dictates of his own conscience. On this account, principally, some of the most godly persons in the valleys felt compelled to withdraw themselves from the communion of the Vaudois Church, and to institute a separate communion of their own. This secession is chiefly confined to the parish of San Giovanni, and took its origin from the conduct of M. Mondon, the former pastor there. This man, while studying at Geneva, imbibed the Socinian doctrines so unblushingly taught in its academy, and afterwards began to preach them to his flock. Those who dissented from his doctrines, applied to the Table to be allowed to restrict their communion to those churches whose pastors were known to be sound in the faith; and when this most reasonable request was refused, they had no alternative left them but to secede. Being joined by a young minister, called M. Gay, returning at that time to the valleys, they received the sanction of the civil authorities to form themselves into a separate assembly, and had the Lord's Supper dispensed among them for the first time in 1831. M. Mondon and his adherents acted towards them in a most harsh and tyrannical manner; but it must be remembered, that the great body of the Waldensian pastors disapproved of these proceedings. M. Bonjour, his successor in San Giovanni, is decidedly evangelical; and the seceders, amounting in all to sixty individuals, now generally attend the other services in the Vaudois churches, though they still refuse to join in communion with them. I had the strongest assurances from the moderator, himself decidedly a pious man, that all the clergy at present in the service of the valleys, both hold and

preach the doctrines contained in their confession of faith. I do not mean to affirm, that the pastors are all men of deep-toned piety, and great spiritual experience, or all equally zealous in the discharge of their duties. Some of them, especially those who have been trained of late years under the auspices of Vinet, at Lausanne, and Gaussen and Merle d'Aubigné, at Geneva, are decidedly so, and would be reckoned blessings and ornaments to any Church; and if there are others not so spiritually-minded, it is at least matter of unfeigned thankfulness, that they preach the sound doctrines laid down in their own evangelical standards.

The Vaudois Church has ever been distinguished for its extreme anxiety to extend the blessing of education to all the inhabitants of the valleys. They still continue to devote much of their attention to this subject; and by the labours of Dr Gilly, Colonel Beckwith, and other zealous friends, a considerable improvement has of late years taken place in their educational institutions. Every parish has its parochial school, and the teachers are elected conjointly by the Consistoire, and the Municipal Council. Their salaries vary from 300 francs, to 600 francs, (L.25) and are paid partly by funds raised in Holland for the purpose, and partly by a tax laid on each commune by government. There are besides, 120 district schools in the valleys, which are taught in miserable hovels on the mountain sides, a small salary being allowed to each teacher, by the Consistoire of the parish in which his school is situated. The parish schools are kept open during eight or ten months of the year, the smaller ones, during three, four, or five months in winter, according as the season is more or less favourable for agricultural operations. They are examined twice a-year by the pastor, and two

elders, appointed for the purpose by the Consistoire; and reading, writing, arithmetic, French and Italian Grammar, the Bible, Osterwald's Catechism, and sacred music are the ordinary branches taught in them. The *patois* of the country is necessarily employed in them, as the medium of communicating knowledge; and as, in all probability, it will ever continue to be used in the *chalets* of the peasants, I am inclined to think, that the republication of their ancient Catechism, and of their celebrated poem, "La Nobla Leçon," for the use of schools and private families, would be attended with great advantage, as the children would thus acquire a knowledge of the elements of Divine truth, at an earlier age than they can do at present, when it is communicated in a foreign language, which must first have been acquired through the medium of their own. There are five schools for girls in the valleys, to which the London Vaudois Committee give an annual grant of L.52, in addition to four others supported by private liberality. The appointment of the matrons is vested in the Table. In 1837 the foundation stone of an Institution for the higher branches of education, called Trinity College, was laid at La Torre,—funds for the purpose having been raised by Dr Gilly in England. It is now complete, and the course of study pursued there, comprises classics, mathematics, belles lettres, geography, and history. Philosophy and theology are forbidden by government to be taught in the valleys. There were fifty students in the College in July last, and four professors, one of whom is also principal. The course of study lasts six years, after which those who are intended for the ministry remove to some foreign university to complete their education. I have but to add that Colonel Beckwith has founded a female school of a su-

perior order, at La Torre, for the education of pastors' daughters and other young ladies, which is very ably conducted, to bring this sketch of their educational state to a close.

During the days of the empire, when Napoleon was driving kings before him into banishment, and planting his victorious eagle successively in every province of Italy, the Vaudois, notwithstanding their poverty and insignificance, attracted his attention, and found favour in his eyes. More loyal, honest, and industrious than their countrymen who inhabited the plains of Piémont, he yet found them prohibited by a barbarous edict, from acquiring land or following any profession, beyond an arbitrary boundary therein defined as the limit of their habitation. With an impartiality that did him honour, he instantly removed all restrictions, placed the Protestants on a level with their Popish fellow-subjects, and in short introduced a new era in the history of the valleys. The clergy was the only class among the Vaudois, who, for a time, were sufferers by his usurpation of Italy. An annual pension from this country bestowed upon them from the time of William and Mary, was withheld by the British government from the moment that they became the subjects of France. This circumstance having been related to Napoleon, he immediately made provision for them, enrolling their names among the clergy of the empire, and allotting lands for their maintenance which yielded to each 1000 francs annually, in addition to a sum of 200 francs per annum, bestowed upon them for registrations and population returns. Bloodstained and cruel as Napoleon's career undoubtedly was, it is an undeniable fact, that the brightest and most prosperous period of Waldensian history was that which elapsed while he occu-

pied the throne of Italy. "Napoleon never lost sight," says Dr Gilly, "of the Church of the Valleys, after he had once learned to take an interest in its fate. I have the copy of an order signed by him at Moscow in 1812, by which he directed a negligent Vaudois pastor to be suspended. Strange! that the invader of Russia, in the palace of the Czars, should be concerning himself with the affairs of a small parish in the remote wilds of Piedmont; and that the Protestant representatives of the 'Defender of the Faith,' should forget the Waldenses at the congress of Vienna! The usurpers, Cromwell and Buonaparte, have left a better lesson behind them in regard to the Vaudois, than the advocates of legitimacy."

At the peace concluded in 1814, the throne of Sardinia was again restored to the house of Savoy, and with its return, all the apprehensions of the Vaudois were again called forth. It is true that a clause in the treaty of Paris, of May 31, 1814, stipulated, "That in the countries restored and ceded by the present treaty, *no individual of whatever class or condition shall be prevented, harassed, or disturbed in his person or property, under any pretext*," yet still the Vaudois remembered how it had fared with them under the old régime; and the deputation from the valleys, which proceeded to Geneva to welcome Victor Emanuel on his landing, and to declare their loyalty, besought him earnestly, that the civil rights and privileges acquired under the empire might not be disturbed. They were put off, however, with fair promises, which, from his subsequent conduct, it seems probable he never intended to be put in execution. Undoubtedly it is mainly owing to British wealth and valour that the reigning family ever were restored; and had our representatives been suffi-

ciently alive to Protestant interests when that treaty was drawn up, such stringent clauses might easily have been introduced into it, as would have for ever secured the Vaudois in the undisturbed enjoyment of the liberties they had previously acquired. Victor Emanuel showed by his treatment of Lord William Bentinck that he was fully aware of this oversight. "The British General naturally conceived, that he who had been instrumental in replacing his majesty upon the throne of his ancestors, had some pretensions to be heard in favour of subjects, who professed the same religion as his own sovereign and himself. He took the earliest opportunity of urging their suit, and at Geneva, before the king could even set foot in the hereditary dominions to which the British arms had restored him, and while he was yet under the protection of a British escort, Lord William Bentinck most earnestly pleaded for the oppressed churches of the valleys. The king listened to the eloquent and feeling appeal, with worse than indifference. His determination most probably was already made, for in four days afterwards, and on the morning after he had taken possession of his palace at Turin, the ungrateful monarch issued an edict, by which he dispossessed the Vaudois of all that they had enjoyed during his dethronement; and put many vexatious decrees in force which had been proclaimed against them by his bigoted and intolerant predecessors.* Amongst other acts of cruelty towards the Vaudois, which signalized his restoration to the throne, the king deprived their clergy of the salary allowed them by the French government, and the English pension being still withheld, though the French domination in Italy had

* Gilly's Narrative, p. 92.

ceased, many of those worthy and laborious men were reduced, with their families, to a state of abject poverty. He likewise ordered the church of San Giovanni, built in his absence, to be immediately closed; and when strong remonstrance was made against such injustice, by the Protestant ambassadors, the church was at length allowed to be reopened, on condition that an immense wooden screen should be erected in front of it, lest the Popish inhabitants of the parish, amounting in all to FORTY, should be scandalized by its appearance, or their ears polluted by the sacred melodies of the SEVENTEEN HUNDRED Protestants who worshipped within its walls. Can it be believed, that the same prince who acted so harsh and unnatural a part towards his loyal subjects, should have previously borne this remarkable testimony to their character, "I know I have faithful subjects in the Waldenses, they will never dishonour their name." Some of the more enlightened Catholics are ashamed of the gross injustice thus practised on their unoffending fellow-subjects, and one in particular,—the Count Ferdinand dal Pozzo,—in a pamphlet written to redress the wrongs of the Vaudois, indignantly exclaims, "How then in God's name, could it happen, that without any fault or crime on their part, they should lose their rights and be reduced to their ancient state? It may be asked, by what fatality has the restoration of the King of Sardinia been followed by so dreadful a consequence, as the degradation of his Protestant subjects, while no similar effect was produced by the restoration of the Bourbons to France, nor by that of the other sovereigns, in countries also for a time united to France, but afterwards again dismembered? The fact is, that no Protestants now exist in Europe, in so low, in so degraded a condition, as the Vaudois, and that they are now still more

secretly harassed by some fanatics than they were before the French domination, on account of the ascendancy gained anew by the court of Rome, the Jesuits, and the Parti-Prêtre."* In a former lecture, I doubt not earlier treaties† have been cited, which entitle this country to be heard at the court of Sardinia, on behalf of her Vaudois subjects, but even were none such in existence, is there not sufficient ground for the interference of Britain, or of any of the high contracting powers, in the systematic violation by the house of Savoy, of that very treaty which restored to it the throne of its ancestors?

From that period until the present, the Vaudois have never been altogether free from persecution; for even when exempt from acts of open hostility, they have been ground down by a system of petty oppression, under the galling yoke of which, their spirit must have failed ere now, but for the advice and encouragement of Lieutenant-Colonel Beckwith, a brave British soldier, who for nearly *twenty* years has devoted his time, fortune, and energies to their service. There is the strongest ground, however, to believe, that were it not for the all-predominating influence of Jesuitism at the court of Sardinia, their sovereigns would deal kindly towards these Alpine Protestants. In 1816, for example, letters patent were issued at Turin, making proclamation of the royal intention "to soften the rigour of the measures adopted in ancient times, towards the Vaudois;" but there were those around the throne, whose aim and interest it was to prevent any such amelioration in their condition, and so, with the inti-

* The Crown or the Tiara. Lond. 1842. p. 21.

† Treaties between England and the Duke of Savoy, dated 20th October 1690, and 4th August 1704.

mation of the king's benevolent intention, the matter ended. When the present sovereign ascended the throne in 1831, and for some years subsequent, the influence of the parti-prêtre at court was understood to be less than during the previous reign, and so long as this continued to be the case, he showed considerable kindness towards his Vaudois subjects. This momentary calm, however, was but the prelude of a fiercer storm about to burst upon the valleys, for Rome speedily regained her influence, and it soon became evident, that the favourable leanings of the sovereign towards this persecuted race had only tended to exasperate her ire and to hasten her revenge.

In 1834, M. André Charvaz, the Popish Bishop of Pinerolo, a cunning Savoyard, who had acquired considerable influence at court, while discharging the office of tutor to the king's sons, began openly to utter threats against them, and successfully to exert his influence in getting put into execution, the rigorous, but then obsolete edicts, hurled against their ancestors. In 1836, he published anonymously, at Turin, a book entitled "Recherches Historiques sur la veritable origine des Vaudois, et sur le caractère de leurs doctrines primitives," in which all the exploded calumnies and falsehoods of early writers are again unblushingly promulged, evidently for the purpose of turning the tide of public opinion against them, and at the same time giving a fair pretext for ulterior proceedings of a harsher kind. A just estimate of this prelate's character may be formed from the fact, that while he and his party have succeeded by intrigue, in so effectually closing the public press in Sardinia against the Vaudois, that the most trifling pamphlet cannot be printed within the kingdom without exposing the author and publisher to

the severest penalties, he yet has the hardihood to taunt them with cowardice, or inability to rebut his charges, because they remain silent; and when reminded that their silence is not voluntary, but brought about by his intrigues, he coolly tells them, that the prohibition of the press in Sardinia can form no real impediment, as they have access to the press in France, in Britain, and in Switzerland,* though well he knows, that by availing themselves of the press to which he thus invites them, they would fall into a snare, and expose themselves to fine and imprisonment at the king's pleasure, for contravention of the law which forbids any communication on political affairs beyond the bounds of the kingdom. Is not such conduct in full keeping with the character of the Jesuits? But even were there no such law forbidding them to communicate to other nations the acts of their own government,

* The same author has published an address entitled "Considerations sur le Protestantisme," delivered in the cathedral of Pinerolo last year, on the occasion of the baptism of *twenty-four* Vaudois. In a foot-note, at page 27, he says, "On nous assure aussi, que nos adversaires rendraient raison de leur long silence sur des écrits qui tendent à dissiper leur erreurs, en disant à leurs Frères qu'ils n'ont pas la liberté d'écrire. Mais ils n'ont pas oublié sans doute, qu'ils ont fait imprimer assez récemment leur nouveau Catéchisme à Londres, et leur nouvelle Liturgie à Lausanne, et à Edimbourg. Ils savent aussi, qu'un de leurs Pasteurs a fait imprimer en France son *Histoire des Vaudois du Piemont*. Ils ont donc assez bien prouvé, ce nous semble, que toutes les presses de France, de Suisse, et d'Angleterre sont à leur disposition."

M. Muston was actually banished the kingdom of Sardinia, because he ventured to write a history of the Vaudois Church. He is now pastor of a church in France, and it was only about three years ago, on occasion of the Crown Prince of Sardinia's marriage, that M. Bert succeeded in obtaining from his majesty an *acte de grace* for him.

—supposing them in a condition to take advantage of the bishop's very considerate suggestion,—supposing that the necessary funds were raised in Britain for printing and conveying to them their defensive writings, and that the journals of France were thrown freely open for their use,—what chance, after all, I ask, have the poor Vandois either of propagating their doctrines among their countrymen, or defending themselves against the insidious attacks of the Jesuits, so long as there remains an *Index Expurgatorius* in Sardinia,—so long as the censor of the press excludes all politics from their own journals, and the government prohibits the admission of foreign newspapers, lest they should dissipate the profound darkness of that priest-ridden kingdom? I was informed in 1842, that the two Prostestant newspapers published in Paris were strictly prohibited; and that only two copies of the "Archives du Christianisme" found their way into the kingdom, one for the Prussian ambassador, and the other for Colonel Beckwith.

"It took three years," says the author of a very able anonymous pamphlet, entitled "the Crown or the Tiara," "after the Bishop of Pinerolo had threatened to reduce the Waldenses to the miserable condition of their forefathers, in the 16th and 17th centuries, before Romish intrigue and intolerance could turn away the benevolent heart of the king of Sardinia from his unoffending subjects of the Valleys." In 1837, however, the Parti-Prêtre triumphed, and the king gave his assent, and attached his signature (unwillingly it is said) to a new code of laws, which has already produced the most baneful effects, and threatens, if rigorously executed, utterly to annihilate the Vaudois. Such, no doubt, is the intention of the prelate Charvaz, and his

con-fraternity, and the Vaudois need look for no mercy, except it be extorted by the vigilance of the representatives of the Protestant powers at the court of Turin, so long as the king admits to his councils, one *who has sworn never to rest until he has exterminated them.* After declaring that "the Catholic religion is the only religion in the State," the civil code goes on to say, "The subjects who are not Catholics shall enjoy civil rights, conformably to *the laws, regulations, and usages which concern them. The case is the same with the Jews.*" By this new code the Vaudois are reduced to the same level with the poor Jews, who, it is well known, are subjected to the greatest indignities, and most cruel restrictions, in almost all the kingdoms of Italy;—while "the laws, regulations, and usages," which modify their civil rights, are none other than the intolerant and persecuting edicts of former centuries. The cruelty of these edicts will hereafter appear.

It has been already stated that the Vaudois territory measures, as nearly as can be ascertained, including mountains, 22 miles north and south, and 18 miles east and west; and within this narrow compass there is found a population amounting in July last, to 26,920 souls. Of this number, 4462 are Papists; and strenuous efforts are being made to increase their number, by getting persons of this persuasion to purchase all saleable lands within the bounds. It surely is a great aggravation of their suffering that the Vaudois cannot even call this little territory their own;—nearly a *fifth* part of its inhabitants being Papists, while no corresponding provision has been made elsewhere for the necessities of their increasing population.*

* See Appendix, No. IV. Dr Gilly has published a similar population table for 1823, in his "Narrative;" and by compar-

At present a father can make no other provision for his sons, when they settle in life, than by alienating a portion of his little heritage to each, thus impoverishing himself without enriching them. But where is this to end? Suppose the same process once or twice repeated, and a large proportion of the inhabitants of these valleys will then only have left them the miserable alternative of starvation at home, or expatriation from a country endeared to them by a thousand associations. The amount of the population might not indeed appear to be excessive were the locality one where trade and manufactures afforded ample occupation, but such is not the case in the valleys. There are only two small manufactories for cloth, and two tan-yards, and these give employment to comparatively few hands. Besides this, there is a small trade carried on in charcoal, from which the inhabitants do not derive much advantage, as it is chiefly in the hands of merchants from Turin. Many families have invested their little capital in the purchase of silk worms, and endeavour to support themselves by the price obtained for the cocoons. This is an exceedingly precarious investment, however, because a change of temperature is certain destruction to them, and it is no easy matter in a Vaudoise cottage to keep it always at the same height; while the appetite of these creatures is so voracious that more has often to be paid for the mulberry leaves

ing it with the one now published, the rapid increase of their numbers, and the cruelty of their confinement will at once appear.

1823.	Protestants,	18,600	Catholics,	1700	Total Population,	20,310
1844.	,,	22,458	,,	4462	,,	26,920
Increase,	,,	3858	,,	2762		6620

on which they feed than their cocoons, when gathered, will realize. The last two or three seasons have been particularly unfortunate, and, consequently, the filature at San Germano, which gave employment to a few hands, has been closed.

By one of the cruel edicts above referred to, the Vaudois are incapable of holding any situation, civil or military, throughout the kingdom; in all the learned professions, too, the door is strictly closed against them, for in the edict of 1602, which has been again put in force since 1837, it is enacted, "*that no Vaudois may practise as a physician, surgeon, apothecary, attorney, or advocate, except among his own community.*" It will be asked, what resource then is left for the 23,000 Protestants of Piémont? Agriculture is the only occupation from which they are not debarred by statute, and the exceedingly primitive manner in which farming operations are carried on among them, abundantly proves, that even here they meet with neither protection nor encouragement. Their implements of husbandry are of the rudest kind,—a clumsy wooden plough, drawn by a yoke of oxen, and a hoe of the same material, are the chief instruments of tillage among them, while a two-pronged branch, cut from the nearest tree, supplies the place of a pitchfork in the time of harvest. The truth is, persecution is brought to bear upon them, in their daily employments. On what possible grounds can the Sardinian government justify its procedure in imposing upon the Vaudois a land tax, nearly double the amount of that exacted from the Papists,—the relative proportions being 20½ per cent to 13 per cent? Had such additional tax been imposed on those only who, during the days of the Empire, had acquired land beyond the

limits, tyrannical as such a proceeding would have been, some shadow of excuse might have been pled for it; but surely, within their own limits at least, they have a right to expect that they should be placed on a footing of equality with their neighbours. Nor is this all;—another edict compels them *to observe strictly all Popish saints' days and holidays*, the consequence of which is, that within their own proper territory, 23,000 Vaudois, depending for subsistence entirely upon agricultural pursuits, are compelled to abstain from labour, at least ONE, and often THREE days, every week, to satisfy the caprice of 5000 Papists, who, at best, can only be considered as intruders there. The utmost a Vaudois peasant can gain by his labour does not amount to more than 15 sous a day in winter, and 20 sous (10d.) in summer. Is it not, then, excessive cruelty to deprive them, through human inventions, which they conscientiously condemn, of a half or a third part of the time in which they might lawfully earn this miserable pittance for their families?

Though the edict preventing the Vaudois from acquiring land beyond the limits, issued the very day after the fallen monarch was restored to his throne, it was never dreamt that it could be retrospectively applied to those who were already *bona fide* in possession of them. It is said that the late king was urged again and again by the Popish party, to deprive such of their property; but he steadily refused, declaring that had he been on the throne, they never should have acquired it, but now that they were in possession, he would not take it from them. It remained for Charles Albert, the reigning monarch, on the urgent representations of the Romish hierarchy, to give the order for perpetrating this additional injustice; and had it been exe-

cuted, it would have had the effect of driving back many ruined families on the already over populated valleys. In March 1841 the edict passed, and orders were given to the judge of Pinerolo to warn those living beyond the confines, that their lands must be disposed of; that two years would be allowed for this purpose, in cases where they did not exceed two acres, and four years in cases where they were of larger size. When the tidings of so harsh a procedure, and of the ferment produced by it in the valleys, reached this country, petitions from various quarters were forwarded to government, entreating its interference on their behalf with the Court of Sardinia. A communication immediately passed between the Foreign office and the Sardinian government, which, though it is said to have been by no means agreeable to his Sardinian majesty, was perfectly successful in the accomplishment of its object. The edict has not been enforced; intimation having been given to those concerned that they should not for the present be disturbed, *but that in case of a sale of land, the purchaser must be a papist!!!* I crave special attention, however, to the manner in which this deliverance has been given, as it is a fair specimen of the "cunning craftiness" whereby these poor people are being ruined. The edict ordering the lands to be sold was duly published, and became part of the statute law of the empire; and so it continues at this day. No edict has ever been issued to cancel it, and the permission to retain the lands rests solely on the king's *parole de grace*. So long as his majesty's life is spared, all may go on smoothly, but the persecuting edict is part of the statute law of the empire still; the Vaudois can bring no documentary evidence to prove its repeal, and, therefore, it may at any future time be put in force

against them in course of common law. The moderator, M. Bonjour, in presenting a petition for the repeal of this edict, had an interview with the king, who, it is said, received him coldly, and accused the Vaudois of having appealed to foreign powers for redress, saying, that England had interfered between him and his Vaudois subjects; at which he was very angry, as he was an absolute monarch in his own dominions; on which the moderator assured his majesty, he was mistaken, if he supposed the Vaudois had applied to the English government for redress; but it was natural to suppose that some of their co-religionists from England, visiting their valleys, and becoming acquainted with the "severe measures" which he had applied to the Vaudois, should have stirred up their government to interfere. The king was pleased to receive the petition, but told M. Bonjour, he wished every individual Vaudois to *make application to him by letter for the retention of his property*, as a favour at his majesty's hands. Such written application, had it been made, would undoubtedly have been used hereafter to prove that the petitioners had no legal right to these lands, but only held them during the king's pleasure. From such a snare, however, the Lord delivered them!

It is impossible to enumerate in one short lecture, all the grievances under which these Protestants are still labouring. In each commune there is a municipal council, consisting of a syndic, vice-syndic, and three ordinary members. Of these, a majority must be papists, although in some parishes there are so few of them, that it is no easy matter to find men capable of undertaking the duties of the office. To keep within the letter of the law, in a commune where the Protestant inhabitants are to the Papists in the proportion of 2,000 to

40, they are obliged to elect a majority of councillors from among men of the very lowest grade in society. Crucifixes, and shrines in honour of the Virgin Mary, are erected with studious attention by the wayside, at intervals of little more than half a mile, that the Vaudois may ever be reminded of the superstitions they abominate. Their worship is often interrupted on the Sabbath, by Popish processions, headed by the priests, which surround the church, chanting so loudly that the pastor's voice cannot be heard. Prayer meetings, and reunions for psalmody, have been once and again interdicted by a mandate from the secretary of state. They are forbidden by the edict of 1602, to increase the number of their churches, and beneficed pastors, although the wants of the population demand an increase of both. They are forbidden by the same edict, to offer any opposition to the conversion of a protestant to the Romish faith, while a seminary of missionary priests of the order of St Maurice, and St Lazarus, has been newly established in the valleys, for the avowed purpose of making proselytes. Mixed marriages, celebrated between Protestants and Papists, are not reckoned valid, and the children by such, are liable to be torn from their mothers' breasts, by the priests, as illegitimate, and carried off to this new seminary, or to the Hospice at Pinerolo, where they are baptised according to the rites of the Romish Church. The children of Protestant parents have also been more than once carried off in a similar manner, under the pretext that they had expressed a desire to join the Romish communion,—their little popish playfellows being adduced as evidence against them. Children so kidnapped, are seldom restored;—on various pretexts, the parents are prevented from seeing them until they have

reached the age of 12 if boys, or 10 if girls, when the law forbids them under heavy penalties, to demand the restitution of their own offspring.

The Church of Rome is never at a loss for inventions, when proselytism, or the persecution of heretics is the matter in hand. If one attempt proves abortive, a second is immediately made in another quarter; if one expedient fails, another is as rapidly devised more likely to succeed; and in such a country as Sardinia, where Protestants are not safe if they attempt to offer opposition to the conversion of their nearest relatives, it were strange indeed if these were not sometimes successful. The Jesuits were no sooner foiled in their attempts to drive back the Vaudois within their ancient limits, than they adopted a plan for the extermination of heresy, which partakes at once of the wisdom of the serpent and of the baseness of the tempter. Knowing the extreme poverty of many of their victims, they appealed to their basest passions, and have succeeded in inducing some to make shipwreck of their faith, for a handful of paltry gold. Others more ambitious, have been won by the promise of promotion in the army, or of civil employment in the State. An instance of this occurred about the beginning of last year. A Vaudois surgeon, disgusted with the restraints imposed upon him, in the exercise of his profession, on account of his religion, and ambitious of rising in it, not only embraced the Popish religion himself, but compelled his wife and children to embrace it also, on the understanding that he should forthwith receive a commission as surgeon in the army! I was informed that his wife continues in a miserable state of mind, having been compelled, against her conscience, to conform; but he has gained his point, having, short-

ly after his abjuration of Protestantism, received a commission as surgeon-major, nearly in the following terms :—" *Considering the favourable reports made to us relative to R., and taking into account the resolution he has manifested to return into the bosom of our holy mother, the Catholic Church, appertaining to Rome, We nominate him surgeon-major, &c. &c. &c.* So anxious are they to succeed in the extermination of the Vaudois, that the very prisons are ransacked for proselytes, and it matters not what crimes they have committed, or to what punishment they have been condemned, if the prisoners will but renounce their Protestantism, their liberty is at once secured;—the well-being of the state, the safety of its citizens, and the authority of its judges, all giving way, as in duty bound, before the claims of Papal Rome. Several conversions of this kind occurred in 1843, and the prisoners were immediately set at liberty. One of them, a wood-ranger, had been convicted before the proper tribunal, of laying false accusations against three individuals, of stealing wood, for the sake of the reward,—a third part of which goes to a convent at Pinerolo, a third part to the government, and a third part to the ranger. Having been found guilty, he would undoubtedly have been sent to the galleys, but in order to save himself, he became a Papist, *and the process was immediately quashed.* On two different occasions, in the beginning of last year, the Bishop of Pinerolo, with great pomp and ceremony, rebaptized 24 Vaudois in the cathedral of that city. This man, with his family, (seven in all), were of the number, together with some other prisoner converts, and undoubtedly the prelate must have derived unfeigned satisfaction from the thought, that in his zeal he had converted the very prisons into mission-

ary seminaries for his church, and had succeeded, if not from conscientious conviction, at least from dread of punishment, in "compelling them to come in."

Such are "the laws, regulations, and usages," which modify the civil rights of the Vaudois, and when these are taken in connection with the proceedings just detailed, no one can feel surprised that every traveller who visits them, comes away with the impression that they are not only heart-broken, but miserably poor. Were it not for the provision that God has bountifully made for their sustenance, in the fruit of the wallnut and chesnut trees, which grow in such abundance throughout their territory, it would be impossible for them to sustain life. Their food is of the poorest kind, —butcher meat is a dainty unknown at the peasant's board; roasted chestnuts, potatoes, and black bread of the coarsest kind, with a little sour wine, the produce of their own vineyards, and oil extracted from wallnuts, is their frugal fare throughout the year. The peasant mixes his salad, and trims his lamp, from the same cruise of oil. During five months of summer they reside in *chalets*, on the higher Alps, for the pasturage of their cattle; and here their pastors follow them during the week, to inquire into their spiritual welfare, and occasionally, on Sabbath, to preach to them the word of truth.

Nothing, perhaps, bespeaks their poverty more evidently, than the manner in which they spend their long and dreary winter evenings. Fuel is much too dear an article to be used, except for culinary purposes; but to make up for the want of a cheerful fire, the whole family adjourn during the winter to the byre, and live among the cattle,—the temperature being kept equable by their breath. The oil is also suffi-

ciently scarce, to make it needful to economize, and a saving is effected by the following contrivance:—Two, three, and sometimes four neighbouring families, unite to spend the winter evenings, week about, in each other's byres,—one lamp serves the whole assembly, and the family whose byre is the rendevouz for the week, provide the oil. I was sorry to learn that gambling by cards, and dice, is not uncommon in some of these *reunions*. In others, however, one person is appointed each night, to read aloud to the company, while the others are engaged at their various occupations. On these occasions, through necessity as well as choice, the Bible is most frequently the subject of study, because other books are lacking, and hence, the modern Vaudois, like their ancestors, have generally a very extensive acquaintance with the sacred Scriptures. This mode of spending the winter evenings is not confined to the poorer classes of the Vaudois peasantry, but obtains also among those of larger means. An English lady, who is married to a Vaudois proprietor, assured me that her mother-in-law, who lives with them, still from force of habit, prefers the byre during the winter evenings, to the *salle* with its comfortable stove.

That the Vaudois as a community are not now so eminent for piety as their ancestors were, is admitted, I believe, on all hands; but still I have no hesitation in adding my humble testimony to that borne by most travellers who have visited their valleys, that, notwithstanding their defects, they are, after all, the most moral and religious people in Europe. For amount of Bible knowledge they will stand comparison with the best of our Scottish peasantry; their honesty and simplicity are proverbial; they are ever ready to perform kind offices to one another; instances of licentiousness and

impurity are so rare among them, that when they occur, the entire population feel themselves disgraced, and the sin of drunkenness, so fearfully prevalent in this country, is utterly unknown in the valleys. The desecration of the Sabbath is certainly the foulest blot in their character, although they are not worse in this respect than the members of other Protestant Churches on the Continent. After the services of the morning, the Sabbath is converted into a day of amusement, and instead of "turning away their feet from finding their pleasure on that holy day," they may be seen congregated in groups, singing, dancing, and pursuing their other favourite pastimes, as though the day were their own. The more pious clergy are setting themselves steadily, like Nehemiah of old, to prevent this horrid profanation of the Sabbath, and their efforts have already been attended with considerable success. Some visitors have magnified their failings and defects, on account of the exaggerated opinions which they had formed of them previous to their arrival, from reading their ancient history; it should be borne in mind, however, that in judging of the religion and morality of the present race of Vaudois, the comparison does not lie between them and their forefathers, but between them and the other Protestant nations of Europe at the present day.

Considering the beauty of their mountain scenery, and the interest of their early history, it is matter of astonishment that thousands of our countrymen should pass annually within thirty miles of their territory, travelling by Mount Cenis, from France and Switzerland to Rome, and yet never turn aside to visit them. If a few of those families who now spend their summers amid the dissipations of Lucca, or in the scorching environs of Naples, would select the valleys

for their residence, they would not only benefit those poor mountaineers by the money they put in circulation, but would also increase, by their correspondence, the interest beginning to be felt for them at home. Much has been already done for them, but they greatly stand in need of more; and being too poor to contribute themselves, they can only pray that the Lord would put it into the hearts of their richer brethren in other countries to do it for them. Russia and Prussia have contributed to build their hospitals; England has built and endowed a college, supplied a library for the students, (though the selection is none of the best, containing, among other objectionable works, "*the Tracts for the Times,*") printed their liturgy, and rebuilt their churches and schools; Holland supplies the funds by which their schoolmasters are supported; and, blessed be God, though late in the day, Scotland has also "come to their help against the mighty," and has transmitted to them, in addition to smaller sums for other purposes, L.500 to purchase a Theological Circulating Library for the use of their pastors, which they have called "THE SCOTTISH LIBRARY."

A collection is made annually throughout the Churches of Holland, on behalf of the Waldenses, and I trust the time is not far distant, when the Free Church of Scotland will emulate so noble an example. In the mean time, much assistance may be rendered them by the exertions of individuals, and of benevolent associations, as a sum reckoned small in this country, goes a great way there. I take this opportunity of directing the attention of their friends in Scotland, to some of those methods, by which, in the estimation of the Vaudois Table, the welfare of their Church may be at present

most effectually promoted. As many promising young men are prevented by poverty from prosecuting their studies for the ministry, and as the Table has no available funds at its disposal for their support, the Moderator earnestly recommends the institution of bursaries for their assistance. These should be of two kinds; the larger ones amounting to 500 francs (20 guineas) annually, being devoted to the support of students at the Evangelical Academy of Geneva; the smaller ones amounting to 400 francs, including board, or to 100 francs without it, being destined for the support of scholars prosecuting their preliminary studies at the college of La Torre. I think it requires only to be known that for the sum of L.4, 3s. 4d. paid annually for six years, a student can be maintained at the Vaudois college till his preliminary studies are completed, to induce many benevolent persons to place such bursaries at the disposal of the Vaudois Table for the support of individual students. The Beckwith Institution for the education of pastors' daughters at La Torre, is worthy the attention and patronage of those who can enter into the privations and sufferings to which they must be exposed at the decease of their parents, if not qualified by a superior education to maintain the station they previously occupied. The charge for a young lady's education, including board, is 300 francs annually. Without some such assistance it is impossible for a pastor, with a salary of L.60 a-year, to support a large family and afford them such an education as their station demands.

Another object of deep interest to the Vaudois Table, is the establishment of a female school in every parish throughout the valleys. The number of such schools at present in existence is nine, thus leaving six parishes

still unprovided. One of these schools, including rent and the schoolmistress's salary is only 500 francs per annum.

For assistance rendered in any of these ways, the Waldensian pastors would be exceedingly grateful, but if asked to suggest one particular object on which the members of our Church might concentrate all their energies, I am fully convinced, from long and earnest conversations with the officers of the Table on the subject, that they would recommend the raising of a salary for the support of two assistant ministers to act as evangelists in the valleys. The sum required for this would be L.50 per annum. On account of the persecutions and privations endured in former days, two neighbouring communes were not unfrequently united together under the same pastoral superintendence, and hence it comes, that sometimes two, and even three churches are found within the boundaries of one of their modern parishes, in all of which, Divine service is celebrated more or less frequently. In addition to the fifteen parish churches, there are no less than *ten* others in good repair throughout the valleys, in all of which pastors might be settled with great advantage to the community, were it not for the edict which forbids their increase. There is no law, however, to forbid the employment of suffragans. Could the requisite funds be provided, one of these would officiate regularly at each of the ten churches in rotation, or would be appointed to divide his services among those situated in the most mountainous regions. The other would act as assistant to the moderator, during his term of office, relieving him of the week-day duties of the parish, preaching for him when necessary on the Sabbath, and when not so employed, taking his turn with the others in sup-

plying these district churches. The officers of the Table were so exceedingly anxious for the accomplishment of this object, that I have no doubt they have already made a communication regarding it, to the Assembly's Committee for correspondence with foreign churches; indeed, the moderator assured me it was their intention to do so. I trust the time is not far distant, when, through the liberality of the members of our Church, the requisite funds will be supplied for the support of these additional labourers in this ancient and very interesting corner of the Lord's vineyard.

From all that has been stated, it must be evident, that the day of trial has already dawned upon the poor Vaudois; and if, even in this land of liberty, every countenance is overspread with gloom, at the rapid strides with which the Papacy is again returning into power, what must their apprehensions be, in a land where it makes use of despotism as a convenient tool for accomplishing its deeds of darkness and of blood? A general impression exists among them, that days of severer trial are still in store, when, like their fore-fathers, they will be called upon, not only to suffer, "but to die also for the name of the Lord Jesus;" nor is this apprehension groundless, for when Popery dares with impunity to insult the representative of a Protestant power,*

* Last year Mademoiselle Heldervier, the daughter of the late Dutch ambassador at the court of Sardinia, for the purpose of being permitted to marry an advocate in Turin, to whom she was attached, professed herself a Papist. The father, having refused his consent, she was inveigled into the convent of Santa Croce, by the archbishop of Turin, and detained there. The ambassador demanded the restitution of his daughter, on the ground of nonage, but the archbishop was inexorable; and the king, when applied to by the outraged father, *declared his inability to interfere in the matter!* The ambassadors of England, Prussia,

—to steal a beloved child from his embrace, and to refuse, in spite of the strongest remonstrances, to restore her,—what will it not attempt against the Vaudois, who are so completely within its power? The removal by death, at such a time as this, of the only ambassador who warmly espoused their cause,* is a most trying and mysterious dispensation, intended, without doubt, to teach both them and us, in the day of extremity, to lean on the creature less, and to trust in God more. The unequivocal leanings towards Rome, which begin to manifest themselves in high places, lead one to fear that England will not much longer occupy the proud position of defender of their faith, but so long as reciprocal treaties exist between the two countries, which confer on us the right of interfering on their behalf, it becomes our duty to use every means for the protection of the Vaudois, remembering that the more vigilance and steadfastness of purpose we manifest, the more likely we are, with God's blessing, to succeed. More than 100 years ago, Mr Hedges, the British ambassador, wrote from Turin in the following prophetic language: —"Nothing but great steadiness on our side, and insisting strongly on our treaties, and the king of Sardinia's promises, can preserve the Protestants of the valleys from sure and certain destruction. The inveteracy

Holland, and even of Austria, protested against such a proceeding, and in the name of their respective sovereigns, demanded from the government a guarantee for the future. The answer given them was, *that they had nothing to fear, for their subjects would be treated in Sardinia on the same footing as the subjects of the king.* What a guarantee! If they act in this manner towards ambassadors, and strangers, what may not the poor Vaudois expect at their hands?

* Count Waldburgh Truchsess.

against our religion is incredible, and if it be not supported with some warmth, since it is attacked with so much, it must give way to superior power."

But though the prospect for the Vaudois is dark and threatening at present, I believe that God has still a great work in store for this little Alpine Church to perform, and that he will not destroy her, for "there is yet a blessing in her." Surely there is an augury for good in the work of reformation now going forward within her pale, and in the increasing interest she awakens in the Churches of the reformation, as her day of trial approaches? This reflection forced itself upon me last summer when a representative from the Dutch Church, from the Congregational Churches of England, and from the Free Church of Scotland, met together undesignedly in the valleys, to enquire after her welfare; but I feel it more strongly now, since I have learned how wonderfully the interest in her well-being has increased, in this country within the last two years. May it not be the case, that in the furnace, the Lord is about to purify and prepare her for nobler work? may it not be, that, as in ancient times, when she sent forth on the right hand and on the left the heralds of the cross to gladden many lands with the tidings of salvation—so she shall yet be the honoured instrument of evangelizing all the kingdoms of Italy, and of causing the adjacent islands "to wait for Christ's law." While we watch for her temporal, let us also pray for her spiritual interests, that so "the God of all grace, after she has suffered a while, may make her perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle her," and enable her to go in and possess that land from which she has been so long and so tyrannically excluded.

APPENDIX.

I.—Formulary for Ordination of a Pastor.

My Brethren,—The ceremony which brings us together is most important, as it concerns the admission of N——, here present, to the functions of the holy ministry; let us approach it with a devout spirit, and with religious attention. And you, dear brother, who desire to consecrate yourself to the service of the Lord, consider well the excellency of the calling you are about to undertake. Although you already know its duties, we proceed shortly to enumerate them, by reading the apostolical canons.

(Here the moderator reads Eph. vi. 11—13; 1 Tim. iii. 1—7; iv. 1—6; Tit. i. 5—9; 1 Peter v. 1—4.)

These, dear brother, are the declarations and orders of God himself, speaking to you by his Spirit. And in recalling them to your mind, our object has been to make you feel the indispensable obligation which rests upon you, of conforming yourself constantly to them.

You therefore swear to fulfil, in soul and conscience, the duties which rest on you as a minister of Jesus Christ, and always to teach the pure evangelical doctrine professed by our ancestors, as it is contained in the Holy Scriptures?

You swear to labour for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, wherever Divine providence may call you; and, in par-

ticular, to watch as a faithful pastor over your parishioners, when a flock has been committed to your care ?

You swear to observe yourself, and so far as depends on you, to make others observe, the ecclesiastical discipline now in force in our valleys ?

You swear to submit yourself to the king and the established authorities of our country ?

You swear all these things in the name of God, as you trust that he will help you at the last day ?

The candidate answers, " I swear."

In consequence of the request for ordination which you have addressed to the synod (or to the Table), and of the solemn oath you have taken before God and his Church;—in consequence of the certificates of ability and good conduct, with which the university (or academy) of N. at which you have pursued your studies, has provided you;—in consequence of the power which God has given to his servants to lay hands on those who have been reckoned fit for the ministry, and who devote themselves to it,—the Venerable Company of pastors of the valleys will now proceed to your ordination, after having implored Divine assistance for you. Humble yourself then in the presence of God, and bow the knee before him to whom you are about to consecrate yourself, and let us say together.

[Here follows a Prayer.]

The candidate then kneeling, the officiating pastor descends from the pulpit, and naming him, lays his hands upon his head, and pronounces the following words. The other pastors also lay their hands upon his head.

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, we lay hands upon you, and put you into the sacred ministry. We give you power to preach the word of God, to administer the sacraments, to exercise discipline, to perform all the functions of a minister of Christ. May God fill you with His gifts and graces, and ratify in heaven what we have now done on earth. Amen.

Here the pastors give the right hand of fellowship to the newly ordained minister, saying—

We now regard you as our brother and companion in the work of the Lord. In that capacity we give you the hand of fellowship, saying with St Paul, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine, continue in them."

The pastor then re-mounts the pulpit, and reads the ordinary prayer after sermon.

II.—Formulary for Ordination of Elders.

When Divine service is ended, he who has been chosen elder according to the rule prescribed by the Synod, presents himself before the pulpit, and the pastor says,—

You are aware, my friends, that N. here present has been elected to discharge the duties of elder in the quarter of R. We now proceed to instal him in that office.

And, first, I address myself to you who inhabit the quarter about to be committed to his charge. You ought to consider him as your special overseer, set for the maintenance of order and good manners, and you should feel towards him that deference and regard, which are due to the duties he is called to exercise in the midst of you, and should submit yourselves voluntarily to his inspection and his remonstrances.

As for you who are this day ordained to the charge of the eldership, your first duty is to hold fast with care the mystery of the faith;—to let the light of your good works shine before men;—to set a holy example both by word and action;—to be distinguished by your probity and regularity of life, and so to conduct yourself as to conciliate the approbation and esteem of all true Christians.

You must not only take heed to yourself, but you are called also to watch over this Church in general, and in particular over the quarter committed to your care. You ought then to give exhortation and advice,—to encourage every one to the discharge of duty;—to reprove with courage and with prudence those who lead a scandalous life,—to reclaim with meekness those who have erred;—to labour with all your might, that piety,

the fear of the Lord, and obedience to his commandments may reign in the midst of us. The poor and the sick should in an especial manner, be the objects of your care and attention;—the sick—that you may visit, console, and lead them to repentance; and the poor, to inform yourself of their necessities, whether for the purpose of assisting them yourself according to your means, or of procuring them support, to comfort them in their distress.

And as peace is a most important obligation, and very precious benefit, you should neglect nothing which may tend to maintain or re-establish union in families, or between private individuals. That is an act of love equally advantageous to those on whom it is exercised with those who exercise it, according as Jesus Christ hath said, "Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God."

Finally, you should impose a law upon yourself, never to reveal indiscreetly the deliberations of the body of which you are about to become a member. Silence and secrecy are all the more necessary, where there is question concerning things which affect the honour of individuals, and the peace of families. If, therefore, you are imprudent and unguarded enough to divulge what passes in the consistoire, instead of contributing to the peace and edification of this Church, you would only fill it with disorder and confusion.

Here in few words, you have the principal duties, attached to the office in which you are now installed. Do you promise to exert yourself to the utmost to discharge them faithfully? *Ans.* Yes.

Remember your promise, and keep in mind to fulfil it. It is not to us only you make it, but to God, who now sees and hears you, and will hereafter make reckoning with you concerning your administration. Apply yourself then, that you may be in a condition to hear one day, from the mouth of your Maker and Judge, these consoling words, "Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful in a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

[Here follows a prayer.]

III.—Third Confession, dated 1655.

A Brief Confession of Faith of the Reformed Churches of Piémont, published, with their Manifesto, on occasion of their dreadful Massacre of that year.

Because we being apprized that our adversaries, not contented to have persecuted and spoiled us of all our goods, to render us so much the more odious, still go circulating the most false reports, which tend not only to disgrace our persons, but above all, by the infamous calumnies, to blacken the holy and salutary doctrine of which we make profession, we are obliged, in order to undeceive the spirit of those who might be preoccupied with false impressions, to make a short declaration of our faith, as we have made in time past, and agreeably to the word of God, to the end that all the world may see the falsity of the calumnies, and the injury which they have done to wrong us, and to persecute us for a doctrine which is so pure.

1. We believe, first, that one only God exists, who is a spiritual essence, eternal, infinite, allwise, merciful, just, and in sum, all-perfect; and that three persons are in that one only and simple essence, to-wit, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

2. That the same God has manifested himself unto us by the works of creation and providence, as also in the word revealed unto us first by oracles in several manners, and afterwards by those written books, which are called the "Holy Scriptures."

3. That we ought to receive those holy Scriptures, as we do, for sacred and canonical, that is to say, for the constant rule of our faith and life: as also to believe that the same is fully contained in the books of the Old and New Testament.

4. We acknowledge the divinity of these books, not only from the testimony of the church, but more especially because of the eternal and undoubted truth of the doctrine contained in them; and of that excellency, sublimity, and divine majesty, which shine in them, besides the operation of the Holy Spirit, who gives us to receive with reverence the testimony which the

church gives us, who opens the eyes of our understanding to discover the beams of that celestial light, which shines in the Scriptures, and prepares our taste to discern the divine savour of that spiritual food.

5. That God made all things out of nothing by his own most free will, and by the infinite power of his word.

6. That he governs and rules all by his providence, ordaining and appointing whatever happens in this world, without being author or cause of any evil committed by his creatures, so that faults neither can, nor ought to be any ways imputed to him.

7. That the angels were all in the beginning created pure and holy; but that some of them are fallen into irreparable corruption and perdition; and that the rest have persevered in their first purity by an effect of Divine goodness, which has upheld and confirmed them.

8. That man was created clean and holy, after the image of God, and that through his own fault, he deprived himself of that happy condition, by giving credit to the deceitful words of the devil.

9. That man by his transgressions lost that righteousness and holiness which he received, incurring, with the wrath of God, death and captivity, under the jurisdiction of him who has the power of death, that is the devil, insomuch, that our free will is become a servant and a slave to sin; and thus all men, both Jews and Gentiles, are by nature the children of wrath, being all dead in trespasses and sins, and consequently incapable of the least good motion or inclination to anything which concerns their salvation; yea, incapable to think one good thought without grace, all their imaginations being wholly evil, and that continually.

10. That all the posterity of Adam is, in him, guilty of his disobedience and infected by his corruption, and fallen into the same calamity with him, even the very infants from their mother's womb, whence is derived the name of *original sin*.

11. That God saves from that corruption and condemnation, those whom he has chosen from the foundation of the world, not for any disposition, faith, or holiness, that he foresaw in them, but of his mere mercy in Jesus Christ his Son, passing by all

the rest according to the irreprehensible reason of his free will and justice.

12. That Jesus Christ having been ordained by the eternal decree of God, to be the only Saviour and only head of that body, which is the Church, he redeemed it with his own blood in the fulness of time, and offers and communicates unto the same all his benefits of the gospel.

13. That there are two natures in Jesus Christ, namely, the divine and human, truly united in one and the same person, without either confusion, separation, division, or alteration, each nature keeping its own distinct properties, and that Jesus Christ is both true God and true man.

14. That God so loved the world, that is to say, those whom he has chosen out of the world, that he gave his own Son, to save us by his most perfect obedience, especially that obedience which he expressed in suffering the cursed death of the cross, and also by his victory over the devil, sin, and death.

15. That Jesus Christ, having fully expiated our sins by his most perfect sacrifice once offered on the cross, it neither can, nor ought to be reiterated upon any account whatever, as they pretend to do in the mass.

16. That the Lord, having fully and absolutely reconciled us unto God, through the blood of his cross, and by virtue of his merit only, and not of our works, we are absolved and justified in his sight, neither does any other purgatory exist besides his blood, which cleanses us from all sin.

17. That we are united with Christ, and made partakers of all his benefits by faith, supported by those promises of life which are given us in his gospel.

18. That faith is the gracious and efficacious work of the Holy Spirit, which enlightens our souls, and persuades them to lean and rest upon the mercy of God, and so to apply to themselves the merits of Jesus Christ.

19. That Jesus Christ is our true and only mediator, not only redeeming us, but also interceding for us; and that by virtue of his merits and intercession, we have access unto the Father, to make our supplications unto him with a holy confidence and

assurance that he will grant us our requests, it being needless to have recourse to any other intercessor besides himself.

20. That as God has promised us that we shall be regenerated in Christ, so those that are united unto him by a true faith ought to apply, and do really apply themselves unto good works.

21. That good works are so necessary to the faithful, that they cannot attain the kingdom of heaven without the same, seeing that God hath prepared them, that we should walk in them; and, therefore, we ought to avoid vice, and apply ourselves to Christian virtues, making use of fasting, and all other means which may conduce to so holy a thing.

22. That although our good works cannot merit any thing, yet the Lord will reward or recompense them with eternal life, through the merciful continuation of his grace, and by virtue of the unchangeable constancy of his promises made to us.

23. That those who are already in the possession of eternal life as the consequence of their faith and good works, ought to be considered as saints and as glorified persons, and to be praised for their virtue, and imitated in all good actions of their life, but neither worshipped nor prayed unto, for God only is to be prayed unto, and that through Jesus Christ.

24. That God has gathered unto himself one Church in the world for the salvation of mankind, and that same Church to have one only head and foundation which is Jesus Christ.

25. That that Church is the company of the faithful, who having been elected by God before the foundation of the world, and called with an holy calling, come to unite themselves to follow the word of God, believing whatsoever he teaches them, and living in his fear.

26. That that Church cannot fail, nor be annihilated, but must endure for ever, and that all the elect are upheld and preserved by the power of God in such sort, that they all persevere in the faith unto the end, and remain united in the holy church, as so many living members of her.

27. That all men ought to join with that Church, and to continue in her communion.

28. That God does not only instruct and teach us by his word, but has also ordained certain sacraments to be joined with this word, as a means to unite us unto Christ, and to make us partakers of his benefits; and that only two of them exist, belonging in common to all the members of the Church under the New Testament, viz. Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

29. That God has ordained the sacrament of Baptism to be a testimony of our adoption, and of our being cleansed from our sins by the blood of Jesus Christ, and renewed in holiness of life.

30. That the Holy Supper, or Eucharist, instituted for the nourishment of our souls to the end, that eating effectually of the flesh of Christ, and drinking effectually his blood, by the incomprehensible virtue and power of the Holy Spirit, and through a true and living faith; and so uniting ourselves most closely and inseparably to Christ, we come to enjoy in him, and by him, spiritual and eternal life.

31. That it is necessary the church should have ministers, known by those who are employed for that purpose, to be learned and of good life, as well to preach the word of God, as to administer the sacraments and wait upon the flock of Christ, (according to the rules of a good and holy discipline,) together with elders and deacons, after the primitive church.

32. That God hath established kings and magistrates to govern the people, and that people ought to be obedient and subject to them by virtue of that ordination, not only for fear, but also for conscience sake, in all things that are conformable to the word of God, who is the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

33. Finally, that we ought to receive the symbol of the Apostles' creed, the Lord's prayer, and the Decalogue, as fundamentals of our faith and of our devotion.

And for a more ample declaration of our faith, we do here reiterate the same protestation which we caused to be printed, in the year 1603, that is to say, that we do agree to the sound doctrine with all the Reformed Churches of France, Great Britain, the Low Countries, Germany, Switzerland, Bohemia, Poland, Hungary, and others, as it is represented by them in their

confessions; as also we receive the Confession of Augsburg, and as it was published by the author, promising to persevere constantly in it, with the help of God, both in life and death, and being ready to subscribe to that eternal truth of God with our own blood, even as our ancestors have done from the days of the apostles, and especially in these latter ages.

Therefore we humbly entreat all the evangelical and Protestant Churches to look upon us as true members of the mystical body of Christ, suffering for his holy name's sake, notwithstanding our poverty and lowness; and to continue unto us the help of their prayers to God, and all other effects of their charity, as we have heretofore abundantly found and felt; for the which we return them our most humble thanks, entreating the Lord with all our heart to be their rewarder, and to pour upon them the most precious blessings of grace and glory, both in this life and that which is to come. Amen.

No. IV.

Statistical Table of the Vaudois Churches in the Valleys of Piedmont—1844.

In their order.	Parishes.	Names.	Birth and Ordination.		Protestants. In the Parish.	Protestants. Abroad.*	Protestants. Total.	Catholics.	Gross Total.	Observations.
1.	Rora.	Hypolite Rollier.	1813. Sept. 29.	1838. July 29.	675	9	684	41	725	* In France, . 821
2.	Bobio.	Jean Pierre Revel.	1810. Oct.	1838. Oct.	1537	48	1585	76	1661	,, Italy, . 31
3.	Villaro.	Françoise Gay.	1778. Oct. 26.	1808. July 31.	2264	116	2380	395	2775	,, Switzerland, 147
4.	La Torre.	Henri Peyrot.	1792. Feb. 7.	1818. July 2.	2150	165	2315	1010	3325	,, Holland, 24
5.	St Giovanni.	Jean Pierre Bonjour.	1801. April 9.	1824. July 23.	2087	238	2325	125	2450	,, England, . 1
6.	Angrogna.	Pierre Monastier.	1798. July 29.	1822. July 27.	2045	79	2124	613	2737	,, Russia, . 17
7.	Prarustino.	Cæsar Auguste Rostaing.	1797. Jan. 23.	1824. July 23.	2356	51	2407	63	2470	,, Prussia, . 2
8.	St Germano.	Jean Jacques Bonjour.	1802. Aug. 2.	1829. Aug. 2.	1310	54	1364	351	1715	,, Germany, 8
9.	Pramol.	Jacques Vincon.	1794. June 17.	1821. July 22.	1358	34	1392	150	1542	,, Portugal, . 2
10.	Pomaretto.	Pierre Lantaret.	1814. Nov. 6.	1838. Oct. 7.	1272	21	1293	222	1515	,, America, 6
11.	Villa Secca.	Alexandre Rostaing.	1766. April 19.	1836. May 23.	1552	124	1676	800	2476	,, Africa, . 19
12.	Maneilla.	Pierre Auguste Louis Jalla.	1809. Nov. 23.	1833. Dec. 29.	270	28	298	209	507	,, Asia, . 1
13.	Massel.	Jean Jacques Durand Canton.	1812. Aug. 10.	1843. Sept. 27.	733	59	792	246	1038	,, Turkey, . 1
14.	Rodoretto.	Daniel Buffa.	1815. Jan. 31.	1843. Sept. 27.	500	30	530	150	680	
15.	Prali.	Mathieu Henri Gay.	1813. Aug. 10.	1840. May 28.	769	24	793	11	804	Total, 1080
16.	Turino.	Josué Amédée Bert.	1807. Feb. 8.	1832. July.	500		500		500	
					21.378	1080	22,450	4468	26.920	

LECTURE V.

RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF HOLLAND AND BELGIUM SINCE THE REFORMATION.

BY WILLIAM K. TWEEDIE,

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The Author of the following Lecture embraces this opportunity to express the sanguine hope, that the time is fast approaching when the friends of truth and godliness will be found banded in a wide-spread league against the rising power of Popery. All history, and experience past and present, combine with the word of God to shew, that that system is unchangeably the enemy of Jehovah's truth, and therefore of man's soul; and if the necessity for opposing its progress which now exists, does not compel evangelical Protestants to combine against it, Protestantism will fall,—and, we may add, it will deserve its doom: Study Popery where you will,—in Rome,—in Germany,—in France,—in Tahiti,—in America,—in Ireland,—in Oxford,—it is everywhere the same anti-christian scheme,—the counterfeit or caricature of Christianity,—the antagonist of saving truth; and amid many warnings to the believer, in the days in which we live, to flee to the Rock that is higher than we, it would be one source of encouragement did we find that the friends of truth are alive to their coming danger, and preparing to meet it when it comes, in the strength of Him who alone can turn the battle from the gates. One of the Belgic missionaries exclaims amid exhausting toils, "What a privilege to be employed in labouring for the ruin of Rome!"—and all Christians should labour and pray at least for its conversion.

LECTURE V.

RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF HOLLAND AND BELGIUM SINCE THE REFORMATION.

Present aspect of the World regarding Religion.—HOLLAND—Reformation there—Persecution—Instances—The Progress of Truth—Reformed doctrine at last established—Subsequent declension—The causes—Present state of Religion in Holland—Of Education—The Revival—A Secession—Persecution.—BELGIUM—The atrocities perpetrated there at the Reformation—Instances of Martyrdom—The Reformed doctrine at last prescribed—Popery thoroughly dominant—Revival commenced—The causes—Its progress—The Evangelical Society of Belgium—Its agency—The opposition encountered—The success—Instances—Our duty—Conclusion.

THE most superficial observer of the times in which we live, cannot but have noticed the prominent importance that is now given to religion. For no small portion of the past century, it was treated as a subordinate thing, and even appeared satisfied with the treatment which it received. In some secluded corners it *was* raised to the rank, or allowed to exercise the controul, which is its right; but looking far and wide over the face of Christendom, we cannot but notice that, for half a century at least, religion was regarded as an inferior and secondary thing. One nation expunged it from their statute-book; they decreed its non-existence; and if they could, they would have utterly erased it from the

minds and memories of men. Other nations, engrossed with wars or political intrigues, had done in effect what France had done by open proclamation or atheistic decree; and the result was, that religion, the link of connection between the Creator and the creature, was either utterly destroyed, or confined to those whom the Scriptures describe as the "*hidden ones*" of God.

But in our day, a change has come over all this; and in the providence of God, for the evolution of his purposes, religion has been raised, in some degree, to the rank which is its due. Wherever we turn our eyes, and contemplate the doings of men, religious earnestness, in one form or other, appears. It may be the reviving power of a miserable superstition. It may be the putting forth of the persecutor's wrath against the saints of the Most High. It may be the struggle of one form of error against another, or of all errors in league against the truth; but in one form or other, religion is asserting its prerogative, and demanding the attention of men. Do you turn, for example, to Russia in the north? There edict after edict is issued, proscribing or persecuting one sect, patronizing and encouraging another. Do you look to Italy in the south? There plots are laid, machinations formed, and concordats projected, for regaining the long-lost power of Rome, and laying the world prostrate again before her spiritual despotism. Do you turn to Germany, the birthplace of the Reformation,—the land of deep erudition, and restless, but often misdirected activity of mind? There also you find religion the one universal subject on which all minds are fastened, either to corrupt or defend it. It even appears as if another Reformation were dawning there. Superstition has overshot the mark, and the reaction promises a

reform. System after system, and theory after theory, regarding religion, thus pours from the teeming intellect of Germany in rapid succession; and though errors the most deadly and incoherent pervade the vast majority, yet are they enough to shew that religion, the medium of connection between God and man, is the topic which engrosses the attention of myriads of minds, though it may not reign, according to the Scriptures, in very many hearts.

Or again, do you look to France? It is convulsed through all its borders by the plots of the Jesuits. To Switzerland? It is the same. Do you pass to the New World, and watch there the progress of events? Among the millions of America, religion has also secured for itself a place of prominence and power; and though sect be warring against sect, and subdivisions be multiplied beyond what can easily be numbered, yet there is reason to believe that the truth goes forth conquering and to conquer in that land. Or do you pass from north to south—the islands in the wide Pacific Ocean? There also, I need not tell, religion stands boldly forward. Amid all that lately seemed so promising for the growth of truth, the spoiler has intruded there,—the prediction has been fulfilled, "I came not to send peace on earth, but a sword." The New Eden, the Church of Christ, was rising in its beauty, and the Old Serpent, envious as at the first, has marred and deflowered it. Or do you pass to the Antipodes, those lands which make it no longer true that there are only four quarters of the globe? There also religion has become the great subject about which men are decidedly in earnest—it is scarcely too much to say, that in mistaken zeal, some are biting and devouring each other in the cause. In many quarters of India, we see the same spirit yearly gathering strength,—

the interests of the soul, whether as destroyed by superstition or renewed by the Spirit of God, are demanding and receiving more and more attention from men roused into earnestness by the temper of the times.

Or farther still—Do you study the real state of matters in the lands in which we dwell? Look to England, and see its Church in some of its sections, and by implication in them all, shaken to its centre, in a way which some regard as betokening dismemberment, or dissolution. Look to Scotland, and it is lying, in some respects, faint and exhausted under the effects of a great religious struggle, which, we believe, has only begun. Or look to Ireland, and see superstition there rising up in all the energy of five hundred years ago—insisting on its prescriptive right to ruin men's souls, and threatening to dismember the empire unless its demands be conceded. Or finally, see the English universities already become the very nurseries of Popery, so that men trained within their precincts are thoroughly equipped and furnished to do battle for the Man of Sin. See the British Parliament turned into an arena on which to debate the gravest theological questions. Nay, see the Sovereign of Britain appealed to by her imploring subjects, to curb or correct the innovations of their spiritual guides. See all this, study it in the light of the Bible, and then say, Is it not true that religion has asserted, and to a large extent secured, the prominence that is her due? Men have grown earnest in their belief, whether it be truth or falsehood that they believe. They that follow Baal are following him with all their heart. They that follow the Lord are doing likewise, and without advancing farther into the future than obvious facts will warrant us, it is plain to the most superficial, that matters are hastening to some crisis and con-

summation regarding religion, which can be guided and controlled only by Him who holds the hearts of all men in his hands, and who turns them whithersoever He will. The yearnings of our age are after something which man, as man, has never yet discovered. Shall it be unveiled now, or shall men sink into denser darkness than before, because they have extinguished the light which shines from heaven on their path?

Now, in this position of affairs, it is plainly the duty, and the interest of all that know the truth as it is in Jesus, to adopt the wisest means for extending God's religion, and withstanding man's perversions of it. A combination of circumstances unparalleled for many years in the history of the church of Christ, calls aloud for strenuous exertions on the part of all who would not tamely see the truth put down, or interred beneath man's corruptions. We are now assembled professedly with that design, that is, to favour and promote the cause of truth against all the forms of error which are soliciting men's regard; and in the hope that our endeavours may be blessed by Him who is revealed as the glorifier of Christ, we would now endeavour to act in the spirit of the saying, "Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth."

I proceed, then, with the topics assigned to me in this course, and now invite your attention briefly to the religious history of Holland, first as regards the *past*, and then as regards the *present*.*

* Subsequently to the issuing of the prospectus of these Lectures, it appeared expedient to postpone, for the present, the *full* consideration of the state of religion in Holland. The following references, therefore, are both brief and superficial.

I. HOLLAND.

At the period of the reformation from Popery, few countries struggled more devotedly or endured more patiently than Holland for the faith once delivered to the saints. In consequence of its unflinching boldness in that cause, and the soundness in the faith to which it was guided, it has been dignified with the name of "Holy Holland," and the result of its struggles and its sufferings was the establishment of pure and undefiled religion, in a form as nearly as possible identical with the doctrines and tenets of the church which was established at the Reformation in the favoured land in which we dwell. The system called Calvinism, but in reality the religion of the Bible, was planted there, after emperors, and kings, and popes, and priests, had done there utmost, by fire and sword, by rack and scaffold, to prevent it. And while Calvinism was the form of doctrine, Presbyterianism was the ark in which it was laid up. Amid the sufferings which the Dutch endured in casting off the yoke of bondage which Popery had imposed on them and all the nations, they were forced to fall back on first principles, in other words, to take the scriptures of truth for their supreme, their only guide. Nothing else could have sustained them under the long years of wasting persecution to which they were exposed; and the result was, that a religion of first principles, because a religion founded exclusively in the word of God, both as to doctrines and forms, was planted in that land. The close affinity which so long existed between Holland and our native country, may, perhaps, be traced to this harmony of their creeds, and the identity of their forms.

It would serve only to harrow up the feelings of men to

dwell at length on the sufferings which the Dutch endured before they were allowed to enjoy the liberty with which Christ maketh free. Yet, partly to enlist your sympathies in the cause of truth, and partly to shew what Christendom may expect should Popery regain the ascendant, as it seeks, and seems likely to do,* I recite a few of the incidents carefully registered by the historians of those bloody times. So fierce were the persecutors for the extinction of the hated heresy, that no tie was regarded by them. Wives durst not shelter their husbands, nor children assist their parents; for instance, we read that a father was put to death in Utrecht for merely allowing one night's shelter to his son, who had returned from the banishment into which persecution had driven him. In 1522, the Emperor of Germany appointed a functionary to make strict inquiry into people's opinions and belief in religious matters, and this "Faithtryer" *first* threw suspected men into prison, and *then* considered what should be laid to their charge. The names of John de Backer, William of Zorol, Teekson of Narden, Wendelmost-Klaas, and a "cloud of witnesses" appear in rapid succession as the first fruits of the persecution that began to wax hotter from day to day. Preaching the gospel was made a capital crime. Manifesto followed manifesto from month to month, to repress, or entrap the heretics. Books were forbidden to be printed or read regarding the disputed doctrines. To peruse them was declared high treason—the usual resource of blood-thirsty and

* Even since the delivery of this Lecture, another immense stride has been made by Popery, in the proposed endowment of Maynooth. The reclamations of British Protestantism have been disregarded —and this land is to be taxed to uphold a system which the Spirit of Truth describes as "the Mystery of Iniquity"—headed by "the Man of Sin"—"the Son of Perdition."

persecuting sovereigns to ensnare their subjects, and furnish a pretext for their death. Ignominy of every kind was heaped upon the sufferers, and the case of Windelmost-Klaas illustrates the spirit in which those martyrs suffered. Being asked what she thought of the Mass, she replied, "I think it only a piece of dough." As to saints and images she said, "she knew no mediator but Jesus Christ." Being threatened with fire, she replied, "If this power be given thee from above, I am ready to suffer." To one that said to her, "You do not fear death because you have not tasted it," she rejoined, "True, nor shall I ever taste it, for Christ hath said, 'If a man keep my sayings, he shall never see death.'" After she was sentenced to die, she was advised to confess her sins to a priest, but cried aloud, "I have confessed all my sins to Christ my Lord, who taketh away all sins," and in this spirit she went to the place of execution, where she was first strangled and then burned to ashes. Need we wonder though the historian says of this and similar scenes, "the very ashes which were scattered to the wind were a fruitful seed for producing new antagonists to the murdering church!"

It deserves to be noted here, that, as a double precaution, the inquisitors, in those days, burned both the bible and the printers of it.* Every six months the emperor issued a new placard against printing without license; and, not satisfied with such measures, we read that at one time, nine men were hurried to the Hague on suspicion of anabaptism, imprisoned for a fortnight, and then beheaded by the emperor's command, (1531). At Haarlem (1532), a woman was thrown into the lake, but her husband and two other men were carried

* Brandt, History of the Reformation in Low Countries, i. 49.

to the Hague, chained to a stake, and roasted to death by a great fire kindled at some distance from them. At Arras three men were burned to death for refusing to honour a holy candle! In 1533, it was agreed that obstinate heretics should be executed in private. In 1534, Joost, a potter, Wiggertson, and Isbrand Schol, a priest of Amsterdam, were put to death for heresy. In 1538, seventeen persons were condemned to die for their religious opinions—but time would fail to catalogue these barbarities, increasing as they did in number and atrocity from year to year. Cruelty became ingenious in inventing tortures, and relentless in inflicting them, and all this, in terms of the Emperor's first manifesto, "*To extend the glory of the Holy Cross, and of our Saviour's suffering, to the utmost corners of the earth.*" Amid these remorseless doings, all shared the same fate; priest and people were equally hurried to the scaffold or the stake, if they ventured to take their religion from the word of God. It was deemed a favour to be only beheaded, without enduring the preliminary tortures, and that favour was purchased by recantation; the rest of the torture was remitted, but life was not spared.* To say that "Salvation proceeds from Christ alone," was held to be a cause for decapitation.† Women were buried alive. Some were crushed alive into coffins purposely made too small for their bodies, with a view to add to their torments, and then buried before they were dead! When the Redeemer came to earth to reconduct his people to glory, it is well known that the power of Satan was more signally displayed than at any former period; and, in like manner, when his truth was resuscitated at the Reformation, "spiritual wickednesses in high places"

* See Brandt, i. 84. † Ibid. 85.

were let loose in great strength against it. The most revolting catalogue of atrocities that ever were perpetrated—except, perhaps, by Indian scalping-knives—is found in Brandt's History of the Reformation, spreading over a period of sixty or seventy years. In Holland, during all that time "men had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy;) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth," for the "*Church of Executioners*" did its work with an ardour increased by malignity.

But, in spite of every obstacle, the truth grew and prevailed. The Church in Holland was at last established upon thoroughly Reformed principles (1579), and the result was, that for many generations, its people were signalized by their high-toned moral and religious character. Imbued from their youth with religious knowledge—their minds being at once expanded and whetted by the influence of truth—their habits were such as highly to distinguish them among the nations of the continent. Though limited in extent of territory and in numbers, their influence was at one period largely felt, while in some places it was paramount, all round the globe. In short, as from the country in which we dwell, men have gone forth to every land throughout the earth, and there become conspicuous or even renowned, so from Holland, with about an equal population, men have gone forth subduing kingdoms, planting colonies, heaping up riches, and rendering their country, for a time, supreme both by land and sea. Politicians and others might find various

explanations for this coincidence between the Dutch and the men of our native land. We would largely ascribe it to the identity of their training, the enlarging and expansion of mind occasioned by religious knowledge even where it is not sanctified, and that self-dependence of spirit which is produced by the conscious possession of a truth which we feel to be irrefutable, because we know it to be divine. Wherever men hold only *opinions*, they will be found irresolute, wavering, and timid, amid straits; where they hold *principles*, they are made bold thereby, and a few men, thus upheld, have seized for a time on the mastery of the world.*

But the glory has departed. A great and faithful host of preachers arose, and their efforts, blessed by God, were like a preserving salt to Holland. It became the asylum of England and Scotland, as Geneva was of Italy, in days of persecution; but the "Golden God" was not then set up; the effects of wealth had not begun to be felt. In process of time, however, the church of Holland shared in the general religious depression which crept over Europe about a century ago, and is only slowly reviving from its torpor. So far had it degenerated, that, as among ourselves, its orthodox confession would at one time have been modified, or even abolished, had it been only *principle* that stood in the

* The population of Holland is about two millions and a half. In 1829, there were 1600 ministers in the kingdom; of these 1478 belonged to the Reformed Church, 63 to the Lutherans, 35 to the Baptists, and 24 to the Arminians. In 1830, the population of the Netherlands stood thus—Protestants 1,541,748, Romanists 836,920, Jews 45,493, Unknown 3,045, Total, 2,427,206. The Dutch Church is now thoroughly Erastian. See *Christian Instructor* for April 1839, p. 122. The Establishment is managed by a Minister of State, just like the Home or the Foreign Department.

way; and there, as in other degenerate lands, popery is now struggling hard for the mastery, and fast making progress. The Dutch clergy are laboriously trained; but their training is another proof that gifts and literature, precious as they are, are not graces. Erastianism reigns through all its borders, for their church is avowedly managed by a Minister of State appointed for the purpose. We are accordingly told that Socinianism, in forms more or less disguised, is prevalent among the religious teachers; and "Holy Holland," one has said, "the invincible rampart of the truth of God, will soon be what Israel was when the Lord exclaimed, 'Woe unto you, teachers of the law, for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.'"

We thus perceive that in that favoured country, popery and rationalism are achieving their wonted triumphs over the souls of men. An eye-witness* has told us that Holland, so bold and resolute for the truth when first it was reformed—so faithful to the word of God in the doctrines which it professes—so highly signalized among the churches of the Reformation—so resolutely set against yielding to the persecutor's rage, has consented to obscure the truth for which it once nobly suffered, and to substitute the fancies of men for the revelations of Jehovah. Error has penetrated—has taken root—is established in many places. The world, with its riches and allurements, has supplanted the religion of God, and now rationalism has largely taken the place of the Saviour—the form of godliness has superseded the spirit and the power among the masses of the nation. Popery and Neology contend for the mastery of mind; and as the

* Dr Malan. Vingt-Sept Jours in Holland.

former is ever active and vigilant, while the latter is inert and inefficient, who that has read the history of the past can doubt the issue of the struggle? In reference to spiritual things, darkness will cover the land, and gross darkness the people.

But hear the voice of one from that once privileged land. The words convey a loud appeal across the German Ocean:—"Great anarchy of principle reigns in our churches: Socinians, Arians, Pelagians, Remonstrants, all under the name of Reformed pastors, preach in full liberty their perverse doctrines."—"The Synod, composed in a great part of unfaithful pastors, does nothing to stop this fatal flood."—"In our cities and in our villages, in catechetical lessons and in other books, Arian and Socinian doctrines are everywhere preached, and pastors are never summoned to account. The training of the young is so conducted as not to offend the Roman Catholics; and though the State has adopted this treacherous measure against the truth, the Church has not offered a single reclamation—not a single word in defence of scriptural education." Conscience is thus weighed down, and the young are either left without religious training, or exposed to the nuisance of a system from which the truths of the holy word of God have been strictly separated. A generation is thus rising up to speed on the national degeneracy, and, it may be, to repay amid scenes of blood, the neglect, or worse,—the actual corruption practised by their trainers. Infidelity on the one hand, and popery on the other, so apparently different, yet in reality so allied, or identical, are fostered; and when the way is thus smoothed for lordly Rome, the mother of abominations, to regain her long-lost power, what can we expect as the result but woe

and tribulation, because the curse of Jehovah is upon her!

Farther, in Holland there are three universities, and "in two of them men teach an infidel science—a modified Rationalism—a system of doctrine in which vital truths, such as the Trinity, the divinity of our Saviour, the inspiration of the Scriptures, the expiation and death of Christ to satisfy divine justice, the personality of the Holy Spirit, all that forms the foundation of our religion, is denied in the most insidious manner; and it is under such teaching that young ministers are prepared for the preaching of *the Gospel*." Under this pernicious system, men who love the truth, yet still adhere to that degenerate church, forebode the speedy downfall of the Reformed Church of Holland, unless some miracle of mercy prevent.* "They retain the Bible; they retain their ancient catechisms; but the heart—the heart is far from God, and the Saviour is well-nigh unknown."

But have the gates of hell prevailed against the Church of God in Holland? Is the candlestick utterly removed? Is its house left desolate and hopeless? Far from it. There are men in that land who now sigh and cry unto God over the reigning abominations, and he has given token that he has heard, and will answer. Strangers remark the strict observance of the Sabbath rest in some of the cities. The hour has come when the children of God in that privileged land begin to awake from their torpor. Like the discomfited Assyrians of old, they have found themselves all dead men; but the dry bones can live. The enemy is sleepless and active—the friends of truth

* These painful facts are given on the authority of Dr Capadose's letter to the Rev. J. G. Lorimer, published in the Free Church Missionary Record for January 1845.

become no less so. A goodly number of ministers are now proclaiming all the counsel of God. There are among them men who can "inflame the heart with holy ardour, or refresh it with the oil of peace." From house to house, religious societies and meetings for prayer are held. It is not now their question what will please or displease men, but what will convert, what will save, what will sanctify their souls,—men who would rather bring sinners to enjoy the unction of the Holy One,—than infect them with a crude and diluted theology, proclaim the way of salvation by the free grace of God. They are not satisfied with merely preaching the truth in formality; they seek for its fruits—they pray for its increase; they fortify themselves with the word of their God—they reclaim against the reigning corruptions—they speak in faith to the spiritually dead—and though they may still be few who do so, God has ever chosen, and he is now choosing in Holland, weak things to confound the mighty, and things that are not, to bring to nought things that are. Christ as the substitute of his elect church, from his cradle to his cross, is openly proclaimed. Men boldly say "Let the formalist condemn—let *the Christian* who loves the world, and therefore fears it, be scandalized—let those who do not understand how spiritual life is opposed to their dead orthodoxy, continue at their cards, and refuse to unite with us; what of that? It is for the life, and the salvation of our souls that we act. They are lost—they languish—the world seduces them while our shepherds continue at their games—or even blame those who are compelled by conscience and by truth, to proclaim that *Christians are not of the world.*"

In consequence of these movements, headed by such men as the poet Bilderdyk, and the lawyer Da Costa,

the ancient spirit of Holland begins to be stirred. The men that know the truth and feel its preciousness are helping to spread it to others. They first set their own house in order, and then, recovered from their lethargy, they become missionaries in their spheres, till one and another, and another, receive and submit to the truth as it is in Jesus.

But this extent of revival, and of return to the "old paths," has not been allowed to proceed without hindrance, or hostility. The theology of Germany, crude, ideal, superficial, and infidel as it often is, has inundated Holland. French infidelity has weakened and diluted it still farther, and a meagre attenuated orthodoxy, laid up in books, but rarely embodied in the life, was all that for many years existed to oppose the reigning delusions. And in recent times, when religion began to revive and reassert her supremacy in the consciences of men, these combined powers did not tamely forego their ascendancy; on the contrary, persecution has endeavoured to perpetuate what indifference began—the world refuses to tolerate earnestness in religion, and the earnest have encountered the enmity of the world's prince. In the year 1834, a secession from the Established Church took place, headed by Dr Cock, pastor of the church at Ulrum in Friesland, a bold, impetuous man. The seceders at least professed to adhere to the church's original constitution; but Dr Cock was deposed, other pastors joined him—Scholte from North Brabant, and Brummelkamp from Guelderland, adopted his sentiments, and adhered to the movement. Deposition increased instead of diminishing their numbers. Their flocks, for the most part, adhered to them—and either sympathy in their sufferings, or approbation of their opinions, swelled their

number to a considerable secession. The seceders declared their adherence to the constitutional church of Holland; but in spite of their repeated protestations, they have endured sore privations and hardships, both in their properties and persons. They have been persecuted, fined, and subjected to military oppression. In a word, scenes once so common in Scotland, and whose history is traced in blood, have been recently repeated in Holland against men who dared to assert the rights of conscience, and claim, for themselves and their adherents, their sacred right to liberty of thought in religion. Forgetting that the power of kings ends where that of conscience begins, attempts have been made to make men religious by the sword, or holy by oppression. Troops were quartered among the members of the new formed churches, and legalised injustice practised from day to day. As in more recent times, the persecuted sought refuge on the Dutchman's favourite element, the sea; but thither the soldiery followed them, scattered their conventicle—buffeted the members of it, and were guilty of deeds of brutality which only the enmity of the carnal-heart against the truth could suggest. Their houses were afterwards searched by the soldiers—and the persecution carried on against the seceders in detail. The unlimited authority claimed by the civil power in matters of religion was carried out in all its rigour—under cover of a clause in the constitution of Holland prohibiting more than twenty members of any sect not tolerated by name, from meeting to worship, atrocious cruelty was exercised—and some of the worst forms of persecution, namely, those which are according to law, were thus exhibited in Holland. The established church through its Commission, solicited with earnestness the Minister of

State, charged with the general direction of the Reformed Church, to employ his influence with the "Minister of Justice" to check the schism which had thus been occasioned, and that functionary did not hesitate to comply. "His influence and powerful efforts" were put forth in the direction indicated by the persecuting petition, but the hot persecution which ensued, instead of consuming error, only stimulated the growth of the secession. The penal code has been obeyed to the letter against them. The mob by its violence has added to their sufferings. Their appeals to their sovereign for mercy are either impeded in their way to the throne, or utterly neglected. At Amsterdam, at Utrecht, in Guelderland, and Friesland, their petitions have been thus discarded; but the blinded men, who knew not what they did, were thus unconsciously throwing those sufferers upon the sole strength of Him who pronounces the persecuted blessed, whose eyes are on the truth, who will not turn away the prayer of the destitute, and who declares that a man had better never been born than injure one of Christ's little ones.*

* The fines imposed on the seceders during the three years previous to March 1837 amounted to £3400. One individual in about eight months had to pay £160. The seceders of Friesland had to pay £600. Those of South Holland and Guelderland about the same sum. Pastors were fined if they were known to have merely *intended* to hold a conventicle. Utrecht, Leyden, Rotterdam, Bois-le-duc, and other places, have been the scenes of such proceedings. Imprisonment is added to fining, that by the most stringent measures short of death, the secession may be put down. One minister relates that he had ten soldiers billeted on him for ten days together. In short, in reading the narrative of these proceedings in Holland, it is difficult not to suppose that we are reading the history of the persecutions in Scotland for the thirty years previous to 1688. For details, see Christian Herald, vol. iii. pp. 70, &c. 173, &c. 229, &c. 279, &c.

And what has been the result? Have the enemies of the truth succeeded in their blindfold attempts to extinguish conscience, and rob men of their spiritual freedom? They might as well attempt to roll back the flowing tide. Religion has continued steadily to revive. Evangelical truth is discovered to have still a firm hold upon many of the people, and no created power can put it down. Recovered from the effects of French infidelity and German Neology, the Dutch appear to be preparing again to take their place among the nations of Reformed Christendom. Falling back on the principles which formed their national character and established their national fame, the hope cherished on their behalf may yet be realized, that a reforming influence shall go forth from them not merely into Protestant states, but moreover into France, Austria, Italy, Spain, and Portugal.

Religious men who visit Holland, and who are thoroughly qualified to judge of her condition, cherish sanguine hopes of her thus rising from her deep degradation. They liken the kingdom to a garden whose odours are still felt, nay felt the more, although the sun has set; and, remembering that the Sun of Righteousness is still, as of old, powerful to reanimate and quicken, godly men anticipate the time, and that not distant, when, at the name of Jesus, many in that land shall bow in spirit and in truth. Symptoms of that consummation already thickly appear. The word of God is producing the promised effects. Now, as of old, the pitchers with their lights are seen, the trumpets and the trumpeters are heard. The sword of the Lord and of Gideon is drawn, and, in spite of persecution, its bloodless victories will be achieved. Let British Christians,—above all let Scottish

Christians, labour and pray for that result, fraught, as we hope it will prove, with blessings to the nations. A bulwark for the truth will thus be erected, and Christ will see of the travail of his soul among a people of whom even a bigoted Romanist was compelled to confess, that "they are intellectual by means of their good sense, their industry amounts to genius, their phlegmatic temperament makes them virtuous, and with them passion is reason."*

II. BELGIUM.

Though we have only touched, without pretending to exhaust the wide subject of the past and present state of religion in Holland, we must now proceed to the second division of our subject, *the past and the present state* of Religion in Belgium.

And commencing our survey at the period of the Reformation, it is instructive to notice the efforts that were made to introduce pure religion into that kingdom, and the sufferings that were endured in that cause. Even so early as the year 1523, two Augustinian monks were burned alive at Brussels for their adherence to the

* In recording these notices of Holland, and the state of religion there, the author of this lecture cannot too strongly record his conviction of the deep importance which attaches to that land, or the strong claims which it possesses on the affections, the prayers, and the sympathies of Scottish Presbyterians as the asylum of their persecuted forefathers. There may be difficulties in the way of any immediate efforts on behalf of the reviving church there, or of those who are too indifferent to care for any of these things; yet, after inquiry, we would not hesitate to say, that even though a Deputation from the Free Church were needed to ascertain the real facts, and the right channels through which good may be done, that Deputation should be sent.

new heresy, as the truth was then termed, and a third was privately despatched in prison. In 1524, another martyrdom took place, and from year to year such proceedings multiplied and increased. But amid these persecutions and judicial murders, the cause which they were designed to check, or the truth which they sought to suppress, prospered more and more. In Belgium, as in Holland, we read, "The funeral piles began to smoke very freely by the management of some who understood much better the burning than the converting of heretics;" but there, as in other lands, the smoke of those fires infected all whom it touched. The spirit of enterprise and boldness which signalized some of the chief cities of Belgium, for example, Brussels, Ghent, and Antwerp, gave a tone to the national mind, and when the spiritual despotism of Rome received its first shock at the time of the Reformation, many of their inhabitants gladly sought to profit by the promised emancipation. Even its convents furnished some who united with the other citizens of Belgium in welcoming the doctrines of the Bible once more proclaimed among men. The Emperor of Germany fulminated against these doctrines with manifesto after manifesto, as if by "great swelling words of vanity" the truth of God could be impeded in its "glorious marchings." But in those stirring times, amid the widespread revival, nothing could check its progress. Souls were converted, churches were formed, and the chief cities of the kingdom, in spite of the persecutor's rage, had each a church in which the truth was taught, and where the Bible, not Popery, constituted the creed of men.

In our day of smooth and easy professorship, it is difficult to realize the struggles which the friends of religion had then to make against that system which is so

graphically described as upheld by men who were "drunk with the blood of the saints." From the time when the persecution opened in 1521, till the close of Charles's reign in 1555, fifty thousand persons are said to have perished by the hands of the public executioner, or amid the varied horrors to which a malignant superstition led. "Fines, imprisonment, exile, mutilation of the body, the rack, the gibbet, drowning, burning alive, burying alive, these were the weapons worthy of the cause which the friends of Rome gloried in wielding against the Reformers and the Reformation."* Yet as these thousands died, they just handed down their religion to the next in succession, to be held and bled for as the others had done; martyrdom was coveted and rejoiced in, death was literally swallowed up of victory, and, could we trace before you, even in faintest outline, the scenes which Brandt, the historian of those times, has recorded, it would plainly appear that men grew bold in proportion as Popery grew more and more relentless and fierce. Monks abandoned the cloister (1528), though death awaited them almost at its porch. When public executions were found only to increase men's courage and multiply reformers, the victims, in the true spirit of Popery, were clandestinely murdered in the darkness of their dungeons, and "the cannibal church," as that of Rome has been descriptively called, *the cannibal church* hastened to fill up the measure of her iniquity by drenching Belgium with blood. The inquisition aided a brutal soldiery in the work of death, and all, from the peer to the peasant, were sacrificed on the altar of religious revenge, if they dared to reject the false religion for the true. In one week Brussels saw many of the noblest of

* Heugh's Religion in Geneva and Belgium.

her inhabitants die for the truth. The counts of Egmont and Horne, the Barons of Battembourg, the Lords of Dandelot, of Formault, and many others, mounted the same scaffold, blessing the name of the Lord Jesus. "What, my brother," said Diedrich of Battembourg, to Gysbrecht, who seemed depressed, "is not this the day which we have so much desired? What greater good, and also what greater honour could we enjoy than to die for the doctrine of the Son of God?" "Think not, my much-loved brother," was the answer, "that I am deprived of inward joy. I draw near to the Saviour as I go to die for his name."*

The excesses of the Anabaptists furnished too favourable a pretext for such murderous measures. The rack as well as the faggot, was the argument employed against those unhappy men. They were first tortured, then beheaded—then burnt—their heads and hands were set upon stakes, in different parts of the country; and all this, bear in mind, to promote the religion of the Prince of Peace! All this was done by a *Christian* emperor in league with the vicar and vicegerent of the Redeemer, the Pope of Rome! Though the civil magistrate made full proof of his zeal, in this horrid cause, he could not keep pace with the blood-thirstiness of the priests,† for nothing could satisfy it, but the utter extinction of all who dared to seek religion exclusively from the Bible, and favour from God exclusively through Him whose blood cleanseth from all sin. It gives additional but melancholy interest to this record of woe, to know that William Tindale, the translator of the Scriptures into

* Malan, Quatre-Vingt Jours d'un Missionaire, &c. p. 186.

† See Brandt's History, vol. i. pp. 59, 60, 61, 74, 80, 84. Indeed *passim*.

English, was one of the victims of persecution in that afflicted country. He was strangled and burned at Antwerp in 1536.

Charles abdicated the throne in 1555. His son and successor was yet more vile than Charles, and proceeded, with hot haste and systematic cruelty, to finish what his father had been unable to overtake. Persecution was renewed with fresh fury under the bigoted Philip, the husband of our "bloody Mary," and though the Belgians were brave in defence of their spiritual liberty, nothing could resist the remorseless ferocity with which the reformed were now hunted down. It is computed that one hundred thousand families, of whom upwards of nine thousand were from one city (Ghent in 1534), were driven into exile; and the boast of the brutal Alva, the governor of Belgium, was that, in addition to those who had perished by the sword, he had delivered eighteen thousand heretics, in five years, into the hands of the executioner.* We live in a city with about one hundred and sixty thousand inhabitants, and what would be our feelings were one in every eight or nine of these, in the space of five years to be tortured, or buried alive, or beheaded, or burned, or drowned, or otherwise massacred, because they would not foreswear their allegiance to God our Saviour, and bow the knee in idolatry to the Pope? Ah, how many or how few would be found so faithful unto death as the persecuted Belgians were? The answer may enable us in some degree to understand the atrocities perpetrated in Belgium, against the friends of God and of truth in that lovely but oppressed land.

For a time, it seemed doubtful whether persecution or the truth was to prevail in Belgium. At last, how-

* Dr Heugh on Belgium.

ever, the saints of the Most High were worn out. Exile or death had thinned their numbers, and disheartened the survivors; and after a terrible struggle of more than fifty years (1579), the cause of the Reformation may be said to have been lost in that unhappy land. No doubt, God had still his hidden ones—a remnant were left to perpetuate the succession of the truth, and witness in sackcloth for God; but, like the prophets of Elijah's day, they were hidden in caves and dark recesses, from the rage of man, and worshipped their God in secret and in sorrow. The bold were in the grave, or their dust was scattered to the winds of heaven—their bones were bleaching in the valleys and on the mountain sides, and what could the timid and disheartened survivors do at least, on the principles of human nature, but sigh and cry for the sore desolations which they could neither prevent nor repair? The Bible, however, was often treasured up with care, by the scattered remnant, and secreted from the grasp of the priestly destroyers, who, when they found it, committed it to the flames. One copy of the sacred book had often to suffice for a neighbourhood or a district; and as the voice of living pastors was silenced, and outlawed, the written word was all the more prized as telling of the Incarnate Word—the Way, the Truth, and the Life.* Religion was thus transmitted from race to race—the fire on the altar, though dim, was not extinguished; and as at the commencement of the Reformation in Belgium, three folio Bibles were attached by iron chains to the pillars of the town-house of Brussels, that the people might there read and learn the truth;

* Bibles have been found concealed in the thatch, or walls of old houses of that age, thus connecting the present with the past in a most touching way.

so when the Reformation was all but extinct in that country, the same blessed fountain of light and truth, continued to guide and animate the peeled and persecuted remnant of the faithful. Mons, the capital of Hainault, was thus signalized in the providence of God, and there, as at Sardis, a few there were who held fast their integrity and did not let it go.

From these details, brief, and all superficial as they are, we may be prepared to hear it stated that the Romanists who had witnessed the extirpation of God's truth would triumph in that result. In fact, those long years of persecution had trained and inured them to such hatred of the Protestants, that no where is popery more bigoted than in Belgium. Through all the stages of their history, we find the people there attached to popish dogmas with a fierce and intolerant zeal. They now hate Protestants for political as well as religious reasons. They have protested from time to time against any concessions to the Reformed, and would fain turn the civil government into a mere instrument for protecting priests and propagating popery. In East and West Flanders this bigotry is paramount, and till comparatively recent years, the work of spiritual desolation may be said to have been complete. Some still continued to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and embraced every stray opportunity of satiating their cravings by hearing the gospel preached. These, however, were but units among myriads, and it is scarcely too much to affirm that the gates of hell were, for a season, allowed to prevail against the Church of Christ in Belgium.* A few men had found out the

* We cannot trace this part of our subject with the accuracy which it deserves and would repay. The reader may consult the Scottish Christian Herald for July and August 1841, where he

three great truths of the Bible,—the first, that man perishes while he lives without Christ; the second, that the knowledge of Christ is life eternal; the third, the soul that has the life of Jesus will see God; and they held these truths to the death. But the rest were blinded, though they formed *the nation*. In short, Rome had achieved a triumph, and Belgium was the victim dragged at her chariot wheel.

THE REVIVAL COMMENCED.

But we now turn from the dreary subject at which we have only glanced, to contemplate more interesting scenes. For nearly a century we hear little of the religion of Belgium; the blackness of spiritual darkness had settled thickly down upon it. But towards the year 1780, some streaks of light again begin to appear. Alternately tolerated and persecuted, the few and scattered Christians of Belgium then began to assemble for social worship, and from that period till this day, the light has been slowly spreading. The French Revolution, for a season, swept everything before it, and religion was for a time practically proscribed. Yet that terrible tempest left some salutary effects behind it, and among others this:—Persecutors had less freedom to butcher and destroy. Popery was engaged in a struggle for its own existence, and meanwhile the cause of truth was prospering. In 1814, Belgium and Holland were united under a Protestant sovereign.* In 1830, the Belgic Revolution dissevered them

will find some interesting notices on the subject by the Rev. E. M. Rate.

* Though a Protestant, he could do nothing for Protestantism in that bigoted land. He durst not even allow a Bible Society to be established in his kingdom, "his Chaplain assuring him that if he gave it his sanction, it would cost him his kingdom."

again, and from that period, ominous as it once appeared, we date the commencement of a perfect religious freedom in Belgium. Prior to the Revolution, various parties, to promote their own ends, had clamoured for universal liberty, though, in some cases, they meant only emancipation from civil control. But He who makes the wrath of man to praise him, overruled their machinations, and gave to his people a breathing time at least—that they might scatter and foster the seeds of eternal truth.*

According to the present constitution of Belgium, all religious denominations are made perfectly equal there. The civil authorities have no power to interfere in matters of religion, or in any way to impose laws on any religious body.† "Liberty of worship for all," in the widest sense, and the right to assemble unmolested in any number for that purpose, are thus guaranteed; and if the constitution of the kingdom be honestly acted out, the people of God might worship him over all that lovely land, beneath their own vine and fig-tree, none daring to make them afraid. And education is by the constitution as unfettered as religion, so that the church and the school may there be placed side by side as among ourselves. Sinister influence may be employed, and it often is enlisted to counteract this goodly state of matters. Even now the allies of the Man of Sin are strenuously seeking to regain their wonted power, and from the high places of the land they are abetted and patronised. On the other hand, truth makes slow progress among so many corruptions and such strong counteracting influences as abound in Belgium. It is as when

* Prior to the Revolution, D'Aubigné was a minister in Belgium, and was there trained amid intense Popery for describing as he has done the Reformation from it.

† Heugh on Belgium. Malan, Quatre-Vingt Jours, &c.

two vessels meet in a rapid stream, the one gliding swiftly with the current, the other struggling its upward way against it. Error swims with the stream—truth has the current of the world running strongly against it; yet is that truth making progress, because God is in it, and one after another in Belgium is thus plucked like a brand from the burning. Amid exhibitions of the most degrading superstition, on the part of Papists, and of unprincipled concessions on the part of nominal Protestants, there are symptoms of revival in many corners of the land, and nothing seems wanting but ministers to gather in a rich harvest of souls to the garner of the Lord.

THE AGENCY.

And since God has thus opened up a door, what are the means employed for promoting the desired results?

In answering this question, we confine your attention chiefly to the labours of the Evangelical Society of Belgium,* and the means which it employs are those to which reason and the scriptures point for the conversion of sinners and the edifying of saints. The gospel is preached as widely as ministers can be found to range. The stations which they individually serve are often miles apart, yet do they with admirable zeal preach the gospel in season and out of season in those spiritual wastes. At the same time, they support schools where the gospel is carefully taught, and the young trained to walk in the footsteps of their godly fathers. The children of Popish

* We do not refer at present to the other Protestant Churches in Belgium, of which there are several, but not a few of these hinder instead of helping forward the work of evangelization.

parents frequently attend them, so that, by preaching to the old and training the young, the hope may be cherished that many are brought nigh unto God, and preparing to call him blessed in the days which are to come. A free pulpit, a free press, and free schools, all enjoyed in Belgium, if blessed by the Spirit of God, will soon prove an overmatch for Popery. Then, as a powerful auxiliary, the Society of Belgium has recourse to the system of colportage—a system which it is marvellous has never been introduced into our own land, blessed as it has been in others. According to it, believers of humble station, but men of faith, and prayer, are employed to carry over the country, and sell or distribute, copies of the scriptures, tracts, and whatever can interest men in true religion and the soul.* In godly simplicity, those men speak from heart to heart. Like David they exclaim, "Come, hear, all ye that fear God, and I will tell what he hath done for my soul," and signally have their works of faith often been honoured by God over all. They are the pioneers of the gospel, embracing every opportunity in every place to ply the work of winning souls, and thus begin the impression which the Spirit often deepens into conversion. Then follows the catechist, who trains the inquirers, organizes the church, and prepares for the pastor; while he, in God's good time, is sent to break the bread, and speak the words of life among men who lately were drugged to spiritual death by the lies and abominations of Popery. Churches have, by these means, been formed in places where at first men were so mad against the truth that they would not even sell a morsel of the

* About 60,000 tracts were distributed in 1844. Between 1834 and 1841, 87,582 copies of the Bible were circulated in Belgium, by colportage and other means.

food that perishes to the man who brought them that word which is the manna of the soul.*

The Society, which began its efforts with four agents in the year 1837,† has now Seventeen labouring at different posts in Belgium. But at the announcement of that number, may we not exclaim, what are these among so many? Assisted from London, from New York, from Geneva, from Edinburgh, and from Glasgow, as the Evangelical Society of Belgium has been, it has in the field after all only seventeen labourers, of all classes, in the cause of Christ; and are we not prompted by that petty number to remark, how paltry must have been our aid, when the labourers are so few where the harvest is so abundant! The State of Belgium alone supports 4550 Popish clergy, and all that the Evangelical Society can employ against such a host is seventeen men!

THE OPPOSITION.

Nor are we less urged to zeal in this cause by the hostility to which these labourers are often exposed. Belgian bigotry, so long proverbial, is still often encountered,—for the church that would burn and destroy is not dead but sleepeth. Priestly persecution still attempts to drive the missionaries from their post. Bishops prohibit the faithful from using the scriptures, and denounce the distributors of them. The Archbishop of Belgium devoted a charge to the same anti-christian work. The priests have followed their chiefs. They

* See Malan, Quatre-Vingt Jours, &c., p. 295.

† The first station was Genval, where some earnest Christians were found, owing to a Bible *lent twenty years before* to some inquirers there.

have torn the New Testament in pieces, they have dipped it in turpentine, set it on fire, placed it on a pole, and carried it in Satanic triumph through one of their towns. The missionaries have been fired at,—the converts are persecuted well nigh to death, and yet some display a fortitude amid such scenes which only grace could sustain. The priests seek to seize on the press, education, industry, the army and commerce, for their own unholy ends, yet, as monks were the first martyrs in Belgium when the Reformation began, the priests are now indirectly but certainly advancing the cause which they seek to crush. Nay, priest after priest has abandoned the false faith of Rome, and symptoms are manifest, of some movement even among those whose worldly interests and professional pursuits are all on the side of Popery.* The storms which Whitfield and Wesley had to brave when they first began to disturb the dead calm of dormant England have thus to be encountered again in Belgium. Intolerant landholders, as at this day in Scotland, dismiss their dependants when they dare to think for themselves. Parents, in some cases, disown their children when they become Protestants; but still the truth prevails, for in spite of personal violence and abuse, nay, the more on that account, some are learning to esteem their souls at a higher value than their bodies. On one occasion a priest (at Jodoigne), amid his anathemas, cried aloud from the pulpit, "The curse of God will be on our town since the heretics have come;" and a man, emboldened by such a spiritual guide, actually asked that priest if he would be damned were he to kill the evangelist? The populace sought to drive him from his post by drowning his voice

* M. Panchaud's Address at Geneva in 1842.

in the discord of harsh music.* Women and children insulted him in the streets, and he was allowed to preach the gospel only when supported by soldiers obtained for his defence. But the hostility of those misguided men is sometimes directed not merely against the preachers, but, moreover, against God himself. At one place, an aged blasphemer noted for his violence, in mimic imitation of the atheistic atrocities of the French Revolution, challenged Jehovah to hinder him if he could from lifting a piece of money which he had laid down for the purpose of the challenge. The blasphemer *was not* struck dead by the long-suffering God, and His

* The following extract from last year's Report will not be read without interest:—"Arrived at Jodoigne on Friday evening to hold the service as usual, I found that our enemies had arranged their plans to disturb us while in the act of worship, and to follow me through the streets on leaving, with various discordant instruments. I went to the police authorities to inform them of what was preparing and to crave protection. The Burgomaster, to whom I communicated my object, said he did not know me, and that I ought to have reported myself to the authorities. I told him I had done so, which was proved by the evidence of his own secretary, to whom I had shown my papers, and who declared them all to be in order. The Burgomaster then contested my right to preach at Jodoigne, and said it was necessary for me, before doing so, to obtain permission of the corporation, and that until I had this, he should refuse me protection. I told him I should not ask for permission, because the laws of the country did not require it; hereupon he reiterated his refusal, which I demanded in writing, but which was refused me. As a last effort I then went to the gendarmes, and asked one of the chiefs, if it were indispensable for protection to have an authorization from the Burgomaster. He replied, such was the rule, but, seeing the indifference of that functionary, he would, to avoid disturbance, adopt another course, which was to go himself to the meeting, which would keep the people in order. This brigadier kept his word, and all passed off quietly, except that the mischief-makers assembled in an alehouse at a little distance to display their hostility."

mercy was abused, for the bold sinner exclaimed as he lifted the money, "You see there is no God;" and yet by the words of peace, by delivering the message of mercy from God to that guilty, hardened man, he was so won or subdued as to ask the preacher with emotion to return and teach him to pray.* A malignant priesthood, gross superstition, unbridled impiety, or, lastly, atheism of the most revolting kind, cannot impede the triumphs of free and sovereign grace. Nor should we omit to mention here the embarrassments occasioned, and the hostility displayed by Rationalists and Socinians, men who profess to be Protestants only to mock the truth. The Evangelical Society of Belgium have had much to endure from such men, who have even attempted to induce the government to violate the charter, and arrest the labours of the evangelists.

THE SUCCESS.

Yet in spite of every obstacle which would thus fetter truth, it should call forth devoutest gratitude, to know that the cause of the gospel is prospering in Belgium, and prospering to an extent that we can scarcely believe for joy. With means comparatively insignificant, the friends of religion there inform us, that the Lord has been pleased to afford a degree of success which could have been little expected. As the fruits of the Society's labours, about 1500 adults regularly hear the gospel in twenty-one different localities, of whom about 250 are recognised as converted characters. Three hundred children attend their schools for boys, girls, and infants,

* Details of such scenes are given in "Rapport de la Soc. Evang. Belge," for 1844, pp. 6, 7, 11, 19.

and make daily progress in the knowledge of the Scriptures, while the number could be multiplied manifold had the Society the means. Some of those who have been converted by the Society's agency are now preaching the gospel to their countrymen still sitting in darkness, and the shadow of death.

Amid these doings, it appears that whole villages are sometimes moved by the preaching of the word. The following relates to Fontaine-L'Eveque :—" Eighteen months have now elapsed since the gospel was preached in that village for the first time, and then it was proclaimed irregularly, and only once in the week, in the midst of many difficulties and much persecution. I was the first pastor who rented a large hall, which is used as our chapel. Whenever I preached, it was filled with hearers; the mass of those who hear me have already abandoned, or are in the act of abandoning, the church of Rome. My presence seems to produce a profound fermentation in men's spirits. Many persons of influence come openly to listen to me; and others have led me to understand that they wish to have private conversation with me. The clergy of the town are all astir. Their adherents lift up cries of alarm. 'Heresy is in the town,' says one, 'and is propagating itself.' A rich proprietor, a person of noble family, an annuitant, and some others, are the principal members of my congregation. I am about to establish prayer-meetings in all the quarters of the town, and in the suburbs. A number of persons who are not able or do not wish to attend at the chapel, assemble at these. Last Monday I had a numerously attended prayer-meeting in a private house. A woman cried aloud in the street all the time of the exercise, but did not succeed in her attempt to raise up

the people against us. Yesterday evening I went to another place. The crowd of hearers was immense. The house was not sufficient to contain them. The most profound silence reigned the whole time. It was truly touching to see those poor workmen, after all the fatigues of the day were over, listening with eyes filled with tears, to the invitations of the gospel. When they were departing, they grasped my hand as that of a friend. When I shall be set free from the stations that are now confided to me, there are seven or eight places in the environs to which I shall go to announce the gospel. I have not yet organized a church, but wish to wait some time before forming it. There is a vast harvest, but there are few labourers. I conjure you, dear brother, to give the greatest publicity to these details. Make them to be known everywhere, for they are true. Tell the friends of the gospel to come to our aid. O that Scotland would hasten to aid us by her prayers and by her means!"

Again, "Looking at the vast number of persons who, from the various surrounding villages, attend the preaching, and declare their abandonment of Popery, it will be impossible much longer to continue it as a branch. It must become a station also. The regular services and numerous visits necessary among those who ask for private instruction render it indispensable that the minister should be there oftener than once a week; and as a new chapel has been hired at the request of several inhabitants of Montigny, near Charleroi, it becomes imperative to have an agent at Fontaine. To all these considerations must be added, that a petition, signed by seventy-four inhabitants of three villages, entreating another minister, has been sent us. * * The spirit of inquiry and the desire

for evangelical preaching, are not limited to the already existing stations, and amongst other places where these delightful indications appear, we cannot but refer to a town where there are already several pious persons, who long to have a minister of the gospel among them, making it the subject of their prayers to God, and their solicitations to the agency. It is truly painful to have no other reply than a refusal. To the Lord we commit the wants of this place, and in His name we confidently lay them before the friends of His kingdom."

The following information relates to another station—Charleroi:—"Every place appropriated to worship has continued to receive almost as many as it could contain, and several, of whom before we could only mention their good desires, have now been brought into subjection to the obedience of Christ. It is really difficult to speak of the work at this station, on account of the numerous meetings for preaching the Word, and the varied features of the revival in each locality. In one place the hearers seem to yield implicitly to the instructions of the preacher; in another, they betray more of the spirit of inquiry and research; in a third, they manifest that they are more intent upon certain facts and details, and the evangelist has to reply to those deplorable objections which the infidelity of Voltaire has scattered throughout this commercial and manufacturing district, as well as to feed the souls of those who seek the Lord's direction in his Word, regardless of human opinions. The peace and serenity which the gospel inspires are already known to some of the new hearers, while, on the other hand, others are still in a sad state of conflict between the testimony of God and the authority of Rome."*

* "Practical, experimental piety has been evidently developed

Satisfactory as these statements appear, we cannot withhold other facts illustrative of the present religious condition of Belgium. Romanists have on some occasions sat for three successive hours to hear the errors of their system exposed, and the doctrine of salvation by free grace proclaimed. In one city a few years ago, scarcely three souls could be convened to hear the word of God. At a recent meeting of the friends of religion, in that very place, 500 were assembled, and many withdrew who could not find admission. The Bible, the Bible advances, exclaims one, after a proscription of two hundred years—it is made known, read, and loved, and the conviction is growing in many minds that Popery must retreat before it. By the blessing of God on the labours of faithful minsters, few as they are, the desert begins to be cultivated. A contempt for ignorant superstition is widely spread.* The lying wonders of Rome begin

among the brethren at Charleroi, and the revival has continued with a vigour and extension truly delightful. Persecution, so far from putting down, has not been able to arrest this movement, for where it seemed to have been, in some measure, impeded, it has manifested itself with renewed energy. Thus Lodelinsart, a few years ago the scene of meetings, but reduced through the persecution of the workmen by the directors of certain establishments, is now the theatre of a very important religious excitement."

* Speaking of one of the converts at Gollisseau, the last Report (1844), says, "The servants of the Pope sent two or three persons to reconvert him to Romanism, and they spared no pains to seduce him, promising to pension his widow, to say masses gratis, for the repose of his soul, to have his remains interred with musical pomp, &c. In spite of all this, he was firm, and forsook not the Lord; I mistake, it was the Lord who remained faithful, who preserved him from evil and was his Sun and his Shield. However, they must make one effort more, so one day, at three o'clock in the morning, a knock was heard at the door, on answering which from the window, his wife saw two priests with the host. In her alarm she

to be unmasked. "The stupid slavery to which Popery subjects its dupes," is the language in which some venture to speak of that system, and if the old serpent have in Belgium his state prisons for souls, namely, convents and houses called religious, He that came to bruise the serpent's head has also his strongholds there. From house to house, and even from castle to castle, the truth is spreading, and each new convert made is not merely a soul saved, but a new missionary employed, a new centre of light amid the gross darkness that prevails.

Now from these details, which are but a fragment of what we might submit, we may certainly gather that in some districts, numbers of immortal beings are willing at least to hear the gospel. Not merely the people, but some of the nobility, begin to abandon Rome. To meet the growing demand, ministers are compelled to preach every day, and often thrice on the Sabbath, chiefly among the Walloons, but in some cases also among the Flemish part of the population, and the effects sometimes produced on the men so long kept in ignorance and darkness, remind us of the philosopher's cry, "I have found it, I have found

called for a neighbour by knocking against the wall. The neighbour came out and asked the priests what they wanted. 'We wish to see Mr N—.' *The neighbour*, 'Mr N— does not ask for you. *The Priests*, 'We have nothing to do with you; N— has asked for us.' *The neighbour*, 'That is untrue, but I will inquire of his wife.' He then called the wife, to whom, on looking down out of the window, he said, 'Is it true that your husband has asked for the priest?' *The wife*, 'No, he is converted to the Lord Jesus, he wants no priests.' *The neighhour*, 'Ask him again if he wish to see these gentry?' The wife approached the sick man's bed and inquired what she was to do. 'Tell them,' said he, 'that Jesus is my Saviour, and that I require no mere man to mediate for me before God.' The priests were then obliged to go away ashamed and confused."

it." In short, all the symptoms of a religious revival appear in some districts. Christianity and Mariolatry*—the religion of God and that of the priest, are again in conflict, and we know which shall conquer. Nay, already the conviction is cherished that were there ministers to

* The following is from the Society's Report for 1843 :—"Roman Catholicism flourishes in this country as in a hot-bed. Rome itself cannot vie with it, in blind and active zeal for all that is connected with the interests of that awful system ; and as may be expected, Popery shews itself in all its unblushing idolatry. Money is lavished on the building and adorning of churches, shrines, and Virgins. The Virgin Mary is exalted and worshipped as divine, she receives more homage than Christ. More offerings are made to her, than to Him ; more confidence is placed in her intercession, than in that of the Saviour! The following is translated from a printed paper hung on the walls of a church in Mons :

'I salute you, my Divine Queen, amiable Mary. I adore and bless the design which God has, of glorifying you in this holy place, and of glorifying himself in you. To contribute as much as lies in my power to the admirable purpose of his supreme majesty, and to render you the honour due to you, I cast myself, Holy Virgin, at the foot of the throne of your glory, and with my humble respect, offer you that which all earth and heaven render to you. Amiable Mediatrix between God and man, it is particularly in this holy place you exercise this glorious office, and open to poor mortals the treasures of divine favours, which, *without your aid, Heaven would refuse*. Refuge of the miserable, Protectress of all who call upon you, particularly in this holy place, condescend to pour on me your grace, and to help your poor servant, who will do his utmost to proclaim, at all times, and in all places, your praise and honour, to the greater glory of God and of his Holy Mother.'

The following revolting travesty of the Lord's Prayer, is given in the same Report as a sample of Belgian religion :—"Our mother, who are in heaven, O Mary, blessed be your name for ever, let your love come to all our hearts, let your desires be accomplished on the earth as in heaven ; give us this day grace and mercy, give us the pardon of our faults, as we hope from your unbounded goodness, and let us no more sink under temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen."—*See Note, p. 322.*

send to some quarters of Belgium, Romanism would speedily be abandoned, and the religion of Christ planted on its ruins.*

Do you ask, then, what is the encouragement to us, or any portion of the Church of Christ, to aid and promote the religious well-being of Belgium? We point to the facts now announced, the results already produced—the state of religious transition in which so many are living. We tell of Popery abashed before the preaching of the cross, as completely as its victims are prostrate before the wooden symbol. We tell of old and young, forming whole congregations, all drawn from the bosom of popery. The priests threaten, persecute, and curse; but wherever the Bible is read, the Mass and its accompaniments, ignorance, superstition, and idolatry are abandoned, and a goodly number now boldly say to Rome, We desire neither thy beast to worship, nor thy incantations to be practised amongst us.† We can tell of men who were recently bigoted papists, but who now travel leagues from Sabbath to Sabbath to hear the gospel preached. We hear of a converted Popish priest now labouring as a missionary in Belgium, confessing that when he was brought to "study the Scriptures, he saw his Mass and ceremonies, like a heap of sand, fall to the earth, and crumble into dust." We read of poor workmen, who deprive themselves of food for two days each week, that they may be able to purchase a Bible with their savings.‡ Wherever it is announced that the gospel will be preached, crowds flock to hear, and when those long-deceived men once open their minds to admit God's message of mercy, poverty is welcomed rather than abjure the truth. Many

* See Documents in Witness Newspaper for 25th January 1845.
† Malan, Quatre-Vingt Jours, &c. p. 229. ‡ Ibid. 234.

deplore the darkness in which they have so long been held, and no one acquainted with the state of matters in Belgium, can doubt that if they had only ministers—I repeat it, because this is the great desideratum—if they only had ministers in sufficient numbers, that country which intolerance and persecution once turned into a desert, would soon blossom like the rose. The priests cannot otherwise explain the events which transpire than by saying that the converts take an oath not to return to the church, and so remarkable are some of the conversions of those men formerly so ardent in defence of Popery, that they have been compared to the effect that follows the plunging of red-hot iron into water.* A miner, describing his former ignorance by a figure fetched from his worldly calling, has stated that before his conversion, he was like one in a narrow gallery, in a mine, solely employed with earthly things, and well nigh without a guide; but the steam-power, he said to the missionary,—the steam-power of the Word of God raised him from that darkness to the light of day. Whenever one reads the Bible, they say, he ceases to be a papist, and so true is the remark, that in one village, the church has had thrice to remove since 1837, as chapel after chapel became too small for the worshippers.

From these things, then, it is not difficult to ascertain the present condition of Belgium. Though it has so few agents, and such limited means for operating upon four millions of people, yet, profiting by the religious liberty which the nation enjoys, the Word of God has free course among many; and in such circumstances success is victory. One of the Belgic missionaries has called even their commencements, "une suite de triomphes," and

* Malan, Quatre-Vingt Jours, &c. p. 319.

the very enemies of the Bible have helped to accomplish this result, by their struggles for civil liberty. Nor should it be forgotten, that some of the descendants of the ancient martyrs are now rejoicing in the truth for which their fathers died, while in some of the places where persecution was most relentless and exterminating three centuries ago, the most abundant fruits have followed the preaching of the gospel. In Liege alone, several thousand copies of the Word of God have been sold. One missionary records: "In pulpits, in private houses, in public meetings, I found every door open, and every facility for announcing the riches of the love of God." We have seen that in Belgium, persecution shed the blood of nearly a hundred thousand martyrs, and that blood is now visibly becoming the seed of the Church—for precious in God's sight is the death of his saints. "Many even of the priests groan under the yoke which they are obliged to wear, and were it not from the dread of injuring their worldly interests, they would joyfully unite to break it asunder." In short, after attentively studying the state of matters there, as set forth at large by those who have been on the spot, we do not scruple to aver, that of all the fields which God our Saviour is now in providence ripening for the gospel harvest, Belgium seems one of the most promising and prolific. Let the work be there carried on in faith and prayer, and idols will in many places be cast to the moles and the bats. "What have I any more to do with them" will become the cry of thousands, and this man and that man will be born of the Spirit of God, in a country where Rome's appetite for blood was sated, its inquisition glutted, and its dungeons filled with men of whom the world was not worthy. The gospel in all its simplicity is thoroughly

tial article of its creed, nay, according to it, a sinner may have more righteousness than he needs. Does human nature dislike to draw near to God because "the carnal mind is enmity against him?" Does it instinctively yearn for some veil to hide it from God's burning eye, or withering frown? Then Popery indulges that dislike, and sends the sinner to seek salvation—not from God, but from the sacraments or the church—to find religion, not in the word of God, but from the priesthood; confession to a priest is made equal to confession to God, and pardon from a priest guarantees a pardon from the Searcher of hearts! Sacerdotalism supersedes Christianity, and the priest, not Jehovah, is the dispenser of regeneration, pardon, absolution, heaven. O, no marvel though a system so flattering to man make proselytes in our superficial day; but we may marvel if men who know the truth, and whom the truth makes free, do not rise up in the strength of the Lord God of Sabbaoth to counteract and repress the growth of this pernicious system, for assuredly, like the ivy, it kills whatever it adheres to. Wherever Christians can find a spot of ground on which to resist it with Christian weapons, in Belgium or in Britain, it should be resisted. Like the serpent, which is torpid and inactive in a temperate region, but crushing and deadly in hotter climates, Popery, while subordinate, may be meek and passive; but give it power and it will extirpate and destroy all that love the truth, —it is a sleeping tiger wherever truth prevails and keeps it in check, but give it the supremacy, and all its ferocity will be kindled, its first onset will be death. Witness the massacres of tens of thousands in Belgium. Witness the doings in Madeira, Tahiti, Ireland, in a word, wherever Popery has free scope for development.

Moreover, let it not for an instant be forgotten, that the present religious freedom enjoyed in Belgium may be only a breathing time, like the calm between the gusts of the storm. Symptoms already appear,—nay, efforts are already made, which tend to circumscribe the liberty, and silence the witnesses for the truth. All the deceivableness of unrighteousness which characterizes Popery, according to the word of God, is mustering its resources to suppress or counteract the gospel; and Belgium has thus become a broad arena, on which it must be determined whether the friends of truth shall be most strenuous in its defence, or its enemies in seeking its overthrow.

Nor should we overlook the startling fact, that Popery, all round the world, is fast regaining its former position of power.* In Belgium alone, 240 new monasteries have

* The following facts exhibit, with statistical accuracy, the growth and rapid extension of the Popish heresy in our day:

During the past year, the Society for the Propagation of the Faith raised for that purpose upwards of £140,000. France alone contributed more than £72,000. The society was formed in 1822, when its receipts scarcely exceeded £600. It has a Missionary Record, conducted with great ability, of which 162,000 copies were circulated during last year; 86,000 in French, 23,000 in German, 14,000 in English, the rest in Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Dutch. The Queen of France, and many of the nobility, countenance and encourage this publication, and it is acting like a cement among Papists in every land. The following are the details of revenue for 1844. According to the Paris Journals, the receipts of the Society for the Propagation of the Catholic Faith amounted, for that year, to 3,562,088 f. France had contributed 1,835,025 f.; Bavaria, 232,748 f.; Prussia, 145,066 f.; Germany, 42,159 f.; Great Britain, 237,795 f.; Ireland, 181,905 f.; Spain, 10,578 f.; Russia, 2,449 f.; Sardinia, 257,464 f.; Sicily, 109,118 f.; the United States of America, 6384 f.; South America, 10,247 f.; Oceania, 240 f.— The society expended: in Oceania, 503,826 f.; in the United States

been opened in the space of fourteen years. I need not tell again how rapidly it is rising in our own privileged

1,044,895 f.; in the African missions, 266,069 f.; in Asia, 997,125 f.; in Europe, 547,111 f.; costs of printing, 256,360 f.; the entire expenses of the year amounted to 3,668,762 f. There was a surplus of 424,303 f. in the treasury of the society lying over since last year.

There is the best reason to believe that Popery is rising simultaneously *all round the world*. For example, in Protestant Europe, in those cantons of Switzerland which were formerly most opposed to the Man of Sin, his allies are busily and successfully at work. In England, "the mother and daughter," Popery and Puseyism, are making manifest progress. In the north of Europe, the missions were supported last year at a cost of 105,417 francs. In Holland, the energies of Romanism are put forth to the utmost. In Turkey, its missionaries are busily plying their vocation, chiefly among the young. In Greece, 25,497 francs were last year devoted to spread the Popish faith; and in Gibraltar, 15,000 were employed in the same way.

In Asia the same onward movements appear. The Holy Land is crowded with monks. Antioch, Ephesus, Smyrna, have become so many centres of their operations. At Smyrna a college has been opened. The Jesuits are busy with their craft and guile at Damascus, Aleppo, and Beirout. At Pondichery in India, the popish missionaries have, in a few years, been raised from five to twenty-five in number. Agra is the seat of a Roman bishopric, whence the errors of Popery spread even to the Himalaya Mountains. Eastern Asia and China are drawing the attention of the Jesuits as of old. In Siam, Cochin-China, Corea, Mongol Tartary, they have numerous agents at work. *Forty missionaries have gone to China in one year.*

In Africa the same work is in progress. Abyssinia, the Guineas, the Cape of Good Hope, Alexandria, Algiers, all have been seized on. At Hippo there is popish bishop with sixty-six priests, fifty churches, and eighteen houses of education.

In America the progress of Popery may be estimated thus. In 1790 there was just one bishop of the Anglo-American Republic, and 25 priests. In 1831 there were 9 dioceses, and 232 ecclesiastics, In 1843 there were 16 bishops, and 4 new Episcopal Sees were called for, while the Popish Church could count 600 priests, numerous colleges, schools, asylums and other Institutions.

land, and how its devotees boldly look forward to the time when Britain shall return to its allegiance to Rome. Are not daily prayers offered up for our conversion in the very Belgium to which your attention has been turned?* Is

In Polynesia, Tahiti has been trampled on by popish influence. In Australia, in 1820 there was not a popish priest, and now there are 2 bishoprics, 56 priests, and 31 schools.—See *Witness* of March 26, 1845.

* The following document will exhibit the anxiety of Romanists for the conversion of our country to Popery. It is a prayer composed by the Hon. and Rev. G. Spencer, a priest at Rome, a proselyte from Protestantism, and brother to an English Peer.

PRAYER FOR THE CONVERSION OF ENGLAND.

"Almighty God, Father of mercy—Thou who hast determined to save men by faith, cast a propitious glance upon the kingdom of England. Dispense the darkness which heresy has spread there, and then make the torch of truth gleam in the eyes of her children, so that all may joyfully return into the bosom of our Mother the Holy Church, through our Lord Jesus Christ. So be it.

Holy Virgin, Mother of God, pray for England!

St Peter and St Paul, pray for her!

St Gregory, the Pope, and St Augustine the apostle of England, pray for her!

St Thomas of Canterbury, holy martyrs, holy confessors of England, pray for her!

Holy virgins and widows of England, pray for her!

Deign to be moved, O Lord, by the prayers of your friends!

Deliver your people—bless your heritage, and save these souls redeemed at the cost of the precious blood of your divine Son, who liveth and reigneth with you for ever and ever. So be it."—*Church and State Gazette.* See Witness 15th January.

APPROVAL—We give our sanction to the above prayer, and for every day on which it shall be devoutly repeated, we hereby grant a hundred days' indulgence (from the pains of purgatory). We accord the same privilege to those who shall receive the holy communion as well as to the priests who may celebrate mass with the like views (of effecting the conversion of England to Popery).

We earnestly engage all who are of our Diocese, and especially the priesthood and the members of religious societies, to be frequent

not Ireland almost wholly, and daily more and more, devoted to Rome? Within our own borders, are not many returning to its false faith?* Are there not 22,819 Jesuits at present plotting the overthrow of spiritual freedom in different countries of the world;† 11,413 being priests wholly devoted to the Man of Sin? Do not the woes of unhappy Tahiti tell what will be the portion of Protestantism, when Popery has become, what it seeks to be, the queen or dictatress of the nations again? Did not the Institution for the propagation of the Faith, expend more than £4000 Sterling last year in forwarding the cause of Rome in our own Presbyterian Scotland?‡ Has not one of the bold adherents of

in prayer for an object so important, and to especially dedicate the Thursday to this work.

Engelbert—Cardinal Archbishop of Malines.

Regarding this Belgian dignitary, we find, from a private letter, that he has "received the highest honours from majesty, such as belong only to the first families of the realm, while he possesses so much influence that the military openly say that it is worth more, in the view of promotion, to enjoy the patronage of the Archbishop than of the King himself."

* In England, there are 509 Popish Chapels.

Scotland,	.....	73	.....
Scotland,	.....	27	Stations.
England,	.....	10	Colleges.
Scotland,	.....	1	.....
England,	.....	30	Convents.
Scotland,	.....	1	.....
England,	.....	3	Monasteries.
England,	.....	666	Priests.
Scotland,	.....	91	.....

† They have four colleges in Belgium, and are using every endeavour to obtain the control of all the education of the country.

‡ Free Church Magazine, September 1844. *The Dublin Statesman* asserts, that a very large proportion of this is derived from Ireland.

the Pope (Count Montalambert) declared, that "the Roman Catholic Church is not the slave, the client, or the auxiliary of any one. She is sovereign or she is nothing."* Warned by such words, let us unite and she will be nothing—the breath of the Almighty will destroy her. Her power is political or superstitious, not moral or spiritual, and *must* succumb to the truth.

And finally, let me fetch an argument for union among Christians from the present aspect which Popery presents. How compact and well-knit are the enemies of the truth! How broken and disjointed we! One firm front is presented in favour of Popery throughout the whole earth; its adherents appear all of one heart and mind: whereas the friends of religion are torn up into sections, and rather contend with each other than against the common peril. Need we add, that these things ought not so to be? If only one-sixteenth part of the globe be nominally Protestant, how loud the call for union! If the Romanists be rallying all their strength for one decisive struggle more, (which we know from prophecy will be its last, and perhaps its most bloody,) how important that we lift up a banner for the truth, and lift it up together! If the infidelity of the kingdoms of this world conspire with the superstition of Rome to extinguish or overlay the word of God, shall not we seek by his grace to spread it far and wide? If Popery has invaded our territory, and spread its delusions among us, (and we have found its pernicious tracts in quiet circulation in the city of our habitation,) shall not we make reprisals in those lands where the gospel can be freely preached, and will be gladly welcomed? We enjoy a day of privilege: let it be embraced, and God will honour us; let it pass un-

* North British Review, vol. ii. p. 642.

improved, and our candlestick may either be removed, or our light wax dim, and dimmer still, until it be quenched in blood. Our nation loudly boasts that the British legions have triumphed on the plains of Belgium. The day has not long gone by, when the names of Wavre, and Waterloo, and Charleroi, and Brussels, were frequent in the bulletins and despatches of murderous war; they are now familiar in the reports of the soldiers of the cross. Let them become more familiar still by God's blessing on our help, and that land so rich and beautiful by nature, will become more lovely still, when the beauty of "holiness to the Lord" is abundant there.

NOTE.

The following extracts from the Report of the Evangelical Society of Belgium for 1842-3, will illustrate some points in this Lecture:—"Only a few days since, in one of the largest churches in Brussels, a most splendid crown was presented to a "*Miraculous image of the Virgin*," invoked as the Mother of Mercy. It is stated that there were 90 ounces of pure gold in the Crown, and the workmanship alone cost £280. The following is a description of the Crown, as given in the Journal de Bruxelles, 31st May 1843.

'The front of the cross which is on the orb, is ornamented with 5 superb Sapphires; the one given by her Majesty the Queen of the Belgians, is placed in the middle; on the sides are 4 Brilliants, 4 fine Rubies and 45 Rose diamonds. The back of the cross is the same as the front, with the exception of the Sapphires, for which Peridots are substituted; in addition to these, the cross is enriched by 33 fine Pearls. The arches are of Gothic form and studded with 40 Diamonds and 48 Vermeilles; enamelled ivy branches climb the sides of the arches and meet at the top. The band which encircles the orb, and that which crosses its upper

hemisphere, are of sky-blue enamel, and are adorned with 12 Diamonds and 4 Rubies. The fleurons are embellished with 16 fine Hyacinths and other precious stones. The cap has 4 beautiful Gothic ornaments, with four fine Siberian Amethysts and 284 Diamonds. Between each of these ornaments, there is an inscription in sky-blue enamelled letters, *Mariæ Matri Misericordiæ.* The Crown is lined with Gothic lace of golden filigree work, intermixed with Rubies, Diamonds, Emeralds, Sapphires, Turquoises, and 344 Pearls. The total number of precious stones in the Crown, is 593, and of fine Pearls 377. What in the eye of faith infinitely augments the value of these precious stones is, that they are the gifts of the middle classes, who have imitated the zeal of the poor. (*The subscription to buy the Crown was begun by the poor.*)

'The circle of the Diadem bears an inscription, *Mariæ Matri Misericordiæ*, in azure letters, because Mary is Queen of heaven by the almighty power of God. The emblems are taken from different royal and imperial crowns, to show that Mary's crown includes and far surpasses them all. On the top of the four arches (after the royal crown), is an orb surmounted by the sign of Redemption, because the Mother of the Saviour reigns by this sign of Salvation.'

"As may be supposed, the ceremony of crowning the image was one of great pomp. The Journal de Bruxelles gives the following account of it:—

'The evening before Ascension-day, all that part of the High Street which reaches from the church to the parsonage-house, was planted with firs, on which were hung garlands of evergreens and red, blue and white calico. Several triumphal arches were also placed in the streets. Early in the morning an immense crowd gathered around the church. At six o'clock the Cardinal-Archbishop celebrated the mass, and during two hours administered the communion.

'The confessors had been engaged until midnight in hearing the confessions of the people. At eight o'clock, the Archbishop of Damietta, Nuncio at Brussels, celebrated mass and then continued to give the communion; in an adjoining chapel, the holy eucharist had been distributed from five o'clock in the morning. Several hundreds of persons, seeing the difficulty of approaching the Holy Table, went to other churches to satisfy their devotion. There were three thousand communicants at the chapel alone (the

Church in which the ceremony took place). At ten o'clock the Rector Magnifique of the Louvain Catholic University chanted high mass, at which the Cardinal was present in his pontifical dress, surrounded by his Grand-Vicar, several Canons and a great number of the Clergy.

'At two o'clock, the procession quitted the parsonage-house for the church, headed and closed by a detachment of the Guides (the King's Body-Guard), their music in front.

'The procession was formed by a deputation of the different Brotherhoods of the parish—the Council of Administration of the Church—the Community of the Brethren of Christian Schools—the Fathers of the Company of Jesus and of the Congregation of Redemptorists—the Curé of the Parish and a numerous Clergy—the Cardinal-Archbishop and his Vicar-general—the Rector Magnifique of the University of Louvain and several Canons.'"

LECTURE VI.

Past and Present State of Evangelical Religion in Switzerland, especially Geneva.

By PATRICK M'FARLAN, D.D.,
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Switzerland is one of the most wonderful, and, perhaps, the most interesting country on the face of the earth. The magnificence of its mountain scenery, the beauty of its lakes, and the cultivation and literary taste of a large portion of its inhabitants, make it an object of attraction and admiration to men in all quarters of the globe. Its history in past and present times is not less remarkable than its external appearance. To the successful struggles of the Swiss cantons for national independence, and to their courage and perseverance in defending their dear-bought liberties, we look in vain for a parallel; whilst the actual working of a republican and federal form of government for several centuries, presents some most important lessons in political science, which it were well that the rulers and people of other countries were more inclined to consider and apply.

It is not, however, of the physical appearance or the civil history of Switzerland that we have to treat in the

present discourse. Its aspect, in a religious point of view, is not less singular, or to a Christian mind less interesting and instructive, than its physical and political condition; and it is to this that I have engaged to direct your attention. I shall only observe, with regard to its civil history, that the union of the thirteen cantons, of which the Helvetic confederation originally consisted, each canton sovereign within its own territory, was an event which, in the good providence of God, was made signally subservient to the maintenance and advancement of the cause of truth in the world. Placed in the centre of Europe, indebted for its existence as an independent state, more to the mutual jealousy of the surrounding nations, than even to its own inherent strength, Switzerland continued for many years the chief nursery of the Reformation—the fountain from which the living streams of spiritual knowledge flowed into other lands; its men of learning and piety were the great lights of benighted Europe; and its Protestant towns, like the houses of refuge in its mountain passes, were joyful asylums to the Protestants of other countries from the storms of Romish persecution.

The history of the first introduction of the Christian religion into Switzerland, is involved in the greatest obscurity. We have reason to believe, that it had penetrated into that country, at least as early as the third or fourth century. In the eighth century, when the corruptions of the Papacy were gaining ground universally, two Scotsmen from the College at Iona came and settled in Switzerland, and were probably the instruments, under God, of arresting, for a little, in that country, the fatal progress of the Man of Sin. But the check which he received was only temporary. In no part of the world was ignorance and superstition more profound,

or more widely spread, in the centuries which immediately preceded the Reformation. Christianity was little more than a name, the domination of the Romish priesthood was absolute and uncontrolled; and though doubtless God had his hidden ones amidst the gross darkness which covered the land, no country in Europe stood more in need of the gracious call of the Redeemer,—"Awake, thou that sleepest, arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."*

Another circumstance in the history of the Swiss cantons exerted a most pernicious influence on the habits and character of the people of that period.

The long-continued struggle which they were called to maintain, for the preservation of their liberties against the oft-repeated aggressions of France and Austria, had converted the Swiss into a nation of warriors. War was the element in which they breathed; their youth were trained to it,—the tocsin sounded, and they rushed with eagerness to arms. The fame of Swiss valour was spread over Europe, and the countries bordering on Switzerland anxiously sought the aid

* The following may be given as a proof of the superstition and imposture prevalent in that age:—"Anna Vogtli, of Bischoffzell, conceived the evil thought of working enchantments with the host, and stole the same from the church of Ettiswyl, in the canton of Lucerne, on the 24th May 1447. She soon, however, shrunk from her device, and cast the host behind a hedge privily. Whereupon a white seven-leaved rose sprouted instantly forth from the ground, and in its calix lay the consecrated wafer. The beasts of the field came and bowed before it. The surrounding radiance revealed it to the eyes of an innocent shepherdess, who discovered it to the people of the village. Whereupon the priests came with toll of bell, with cross and banners, attended by a multitude of believers, to bring the holy thing back to its place."—*Lardner's Cyclopædia—Switzerland.*

of the Swiss in their contests with one another. They bribed them into their service, and on many occasions secured their assistance, sometimes as allies, but more frequently as auxiliary or mercenary troops. The Swiss returned to their native mountains, bringing with them the vices and luxurious habits of the plains, and a rapacity and thirst for booty too often, in these times at least, the result of military enterprise. The majesty of the law was set at nought, and the rigid execution of justice on multitudes of offenders was all but ineffectual in preventing the cantons from becoming one wide-spread scene of disorder and anarchy.

It was then that God, in sovereign mercy, was pleased to visit this interesting country with the cheering, peace-giving light of divine truth. The Reformation had begun in Germany. The mind of Luther had been led from one stage in his wonderful progress to another, almost in spite of himself, till he cast off the authority of the pretended vicar of Christ, and held up for himself and his followers the infallible word of God as the only standard of faith,—the only pure and unerring source of religious knowledge. But it is a singular and instructive fact in the history of that period, that it was not through the Divine blessing on the writings and example of Luther, and the other German reformers, that the reformation in Switzerland was commenced. As if for the purpose of bearing stronger testimony against the errors of Popery, and for demonstrating the oneness of the true catholic church, at the very time that Luther and his fellow-labourers were slowly finding their way to the only true resting-place of religious belief, Zwingli, the earliest of the Swiss reformers, was arriving more directly, and far more rapidly, at the same terminus. The beginning of the

sixteenth century was one of the days of Christ's power, —one of the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Germany was receiving the showers of spiritual influence. Switzerland, not less parched or less barren than Germany, was destined to enjoy no small share of the same precious blessing.

Ulrich Zwingli was the third son of a man called Zwingli, amman or bailie of the commune of Wildhaus, in the Tockenburg. He was born on the 1st day of January 1484, seven weeks after the birth of Luther.* His father was a herdsman, and was universally respected by the people of the commune. It was the lot of Ulrich to have, even in that dark age and country, a pious grandmother, who told him stories from the Bible, and devout legends, to which, when a child, he listened with the greatest avidity. The amman saw the tendencies of his son's mind, and resolved to give him as liberal an education as his circumstances would allow. Ulrich was put to school at Wesen, and at the early age of ten was sent by his father and uncle, the dean of Wesen, to Basel, and was entered at the school of St Theodore. There he made rapid progress, and, taking part in the learned disputations which, in imitation of the students at the university, were held by boys at school, always came off victorious. In 1497, Zwingli was removed to Berne, and was placed under the tuition of Lupulus, a man distinguished for his poetical talent, and taste for classical literature. "He inhaled with ardour," says Merle d'Aubigné, "the fragrant breath of ancient lore; his mind expanded, his style was formed, and he became a poet." At Berne, he narrowly escaped being drawn

* Merle d'Aubigné's History of the Reformation.

into the monastery of the Dominicans, who were at this time engaged in a controversy with the Franciscans, and hoped to add to the reputation of their order by the accession of the young and already accomplished Tockenburger. His father, having heard of the allurements presented by the Dominicans, instantly ordered him to leave Berne; and thus, in the merciful providence of God, this distinguished youth was preserved for a blessing to his country and to the world.

From Berne, Zwingli went to Vienna, whence, after a short visit to Wildhaus, he repaired a second time to Basel, where, at the age of eighteen, he became at once a student and a teacher. In compliance with the fashion of the age, he studied scholastic theology; but soon relinquished it, fatigued and disgusted. In 1505, Wittenbach, a pious and learned man, came to Basel, and drew around him Zwingli and all the youth of the university. He predicted that scholastic theology would soon be done away with, and the ancient doctrine of the church restored, and boldly proclaimed the death of Christ to be "the sole ransom for our sins." The preaching of Wittenbach appears to have made a deep impression on the mind of Zwingli.

In 1506, the people of Glaris, a town not far from Wildhaus, called Zwingli to be their parish-priest. He was accordingly ordained at Constance, preached his first sermon at Rapperswil, read his first mass at Wildhaus, in the presence of his relations and family-friends, and towards the close of the year, arrived at Glaris, where he zealously devoted himself to the duties of his parish. His talents and popularity attracted the notice of the bishop of Zion, at whose instance he obtained from the Pope a pension of fifty florins—the price, though not the stipulated price of his attending to the

interests of his holiness in the wars in which he, along with the other princes of Italy were, or might be engaged. Zwingli accepted the pension, and thus became one of the Pope's party. But his eyes were soon opened to the pernicious consequences resulting from the military enterprises of the Swiss, and, in a poem which he published in 1510, entitled, *The Labyrinth*, he warned the people against the ruin which threatened them. Whilst his mind was in what may be called this transition state, the commune of Glaris was counted out for service, and Zwingli behoved to march. The army crossed the Alps, and was victorious. The priest of Glaris returned resolved to devote himself to the study of Greek, "in order," as he said, in a letter to Vadian, chief-magistrate of St Gallen, 23d February 1513, "that he might obtain the doctrines of Jesus from their proper sources;" thus, as Merle d'Aubigné justly observes, more than owning at this early date the grand principle of evangelical Christianity, the infallible authority of the Holy Scriptures. He searched them for himself with earnest supplication for the Holy Spirit; he studied the fathers as commentators, not as authorities, tested their explanations by the Scriptures, and in all the confidence of one who knew and was persuaded that the doctrines which he taught were the truth of God, he preached Christ to the people over whom God, in his adorable providence, had placed him.

A second time Zwingli accompanied his parishioners in a warlike expedition into Italy, and fought along with them on the fatal fields of Marignan. This second visit to Italy was of considerable benefit to him. It afforded him an opportunity of prosecuting his inquiries into the former history and practice of the church; it convinced him more than ever of the ambition, the

avarice, the ignorance and licentiousness of the priests, and of the necessity for a reform. From that time he preached the word with more clearness—he aimed at making an impression on men's hearts, and looked for the fruits of his preaching in their life. A spirit of inquiry breathed over the mountains of Switzerland, and in the preaching of Zwingli the light of the Reformation began to shine on that spiritually enslaved, though otherwise free country.

In 1516, Zwingli was induced to leave Glaris, to be priest of the monastery and church of Einsidlen, a remote and solitary place, where, besides having the prospect of more retirement and tranquillity, and time for study and meditation, he might enjoy the opportunity of diffusing the knowledge of Christ in distant countries, by means of the pilgrims who resorted to that place. He improved the opportunity with great boldness and fidelity. Like Paul when he beheld the idolatry and superstition of the men of Athens, his spirit was stirred within him, when he saw the superstition of the pilgrim-worshippers of Einsidlen. He warned them against supposing that God was more in the temple there than in any other place. He went farther: he told them plainly, doubtless to their utter astonishment, that it was not by pilgrimages, offerings, and calling upon the Virgin and the saints, that they could obtain God's favour; but by faith in Christ, who once offered himself upon the cross, "the sacrifice, and the victim that makes satisfaction, even throughout all eternity, for the sins of all believers." The pilgrims returned to their homes with different and opposite emotions—some in horrors at the supposed impiety of Zwingli, many of them convinced of their past errors, and all of them more or less shaken in their blind and bigotted

attachment to the false doctrine and superstition of the Church of Rome. The worshippers of Mary decreased from day to day; and the Reformation in Switzerland had a commencement as auspicious as its most devoted well-wishers could have anticipated.

No man obeyed his own convictions more calmly or more steadily than Zwingli. He eagerly searched for truth; and when he found it, he would not let it go. Neither threatenings nor allurements prevailed with him to keep back what he believed to be the will of God for the salvation of men. With every acquisition which he made in the knowledge of Scripture truth, he perceived more clearly that "the whole popedom rested on bad foundations." Under this conviction, he told Lucci, the pope's legate, that, with the help of God, he would continue to preach the gospel, and that "preaching would shake Rome." And he did as he promised. He had taught the pilgrims that their pilgrimages and offerings could not save them, and had instructed them to turn the eye of faith to Christ, and to Christ alone. In the same spirit he assailed the doctrine of indulgences. Samson, a barefooted Carmelite friar, had entered Helvetia as a trafficker in that ware, and, with an audacity not surpassed by that of Tetzel, told the simple mountaineers that he could pardon all sins; that heaven and hell were subject to his power; and that he sold the merits of Jesus Christ to any one who was pleased to buy an indulgence for ready money. The indignation of Zwingli was awakened. He preached with great energy, not against Samson merely, but against the doctrine of indulgences generally; and again presented Jesus Christ before his countrymen, as "the only offering, the only sacrifice, the only way."

As it is not expected in these lectures that we should

give a full sketch of the life even of the most celebrated of the Swiss Reformers, I shall draw to a close these brief notices of the life of Zwingli, by adverting, in a few words, to his appointment as priest in the cathedral Church of Zurich, in 1518, and its results.

After a contest, in which a Suabian, named Lawrence Fable, was his competitor, Zwingli was elected, by a majority of seventeen out of twenty-four votes, to be preacher in the cathedral, with cure of souls. It was then that his influence began to be felt, not in Zurich only, but throughout Switzerland. In the Bible meaning of the phrase, he "preached the word." Knowing the people's ignorance of the facts of gospel history, he commenced with delivering, to crowded and deeply attentive audiences, expositions on the gospel by Matthew, in which he laid the foundations of an enlightened faith, and a vital Christianity. In the face of opposition such as he had not yet experienced, he continued to unfold the precious truths of the everlasting gospel. The Divine blessing rested on his labours, and many of his hearers were awakened, and turned unto the Lord. His published writings, and the writings of Luther, dispersed at his instance, added to the effects produced by his preaching. Men shook off the fetters of an ignoble spiritual thraldom; and many who were not truly converted ranged themselves on the side of the Reformers, and rejoiced, if not in the exalted honour of those who are made free by the Son of God, at least in the dignified position of those who have ceased to prostrate their understandings at the feet of their fellow-men.

The result of these changes in public opinion at Zurich was the overthrow, one after another, of the grosser errors of Popery, the disuse of images in the worship of God, the abolition of the mass, and the restora-

tion of the sacrament of the Lord's supper to its primitive form. Zwingli, not satisfied with this, was the first after the Reformation to lay the foundation of Presbyterian church government, by admitting the Christian people to their rightful share in the government of the church. For reasons to which we shall afterwards advert, the line of demarcation between the province of the civil magistrate and that of the church was not distinctly drawn; perhaps it was not clearly perceived. But the subjection of the church to the Pope and the priesthood was expressly disavowed and abjured; and the government of the church declared to be, under Christ, and in submission to his word, in the church itself, consisting of the office-bearers, and other members of the church, including under that term such as made a consistent profession of faith in Christ, and of their subjection to him.

It is impossible, methinks, to look back even on this brief and necessarily imperfect sketch of the life and labours of Zwingli, unhappily terminated by his death on the battle-field of Cappell, in his forty-eighth year, without being deeply impressed with the force of that great principle which conducted him to such glorious results, and gave the only right direction to the Reformation in the other cantons of Switzerland. He set out on his singularly blameless career with this simple, and, to us self-evident, first-principle, that the word of God, interpreted by itself, and searched in humble dependance on the Spirit of God, must be the only rule of faith to every church, and every professing Christian. Guided by this great first-principle, refusing to call any man master upon earth, Zwingli pursued his course calmly but courageously, and mingling the most remarkable prudence with the most ardent zeal, car-

ried all men along with him, and without violence or popular commotion, and with the full concurrence of the civil authorities, overturned the Papacy in Zurich, and laid the foundations of a Protestant, or, to speak more correctly, a truly Scriptural church. Zwingli was not urged to the course which he pursued by disappointed ambition, or a hatred to the Papacy, or the desire of obtaining eminence by the subversion of a great and long-established system of superstition; but led by that almighty Being who has the hearts of all men in his hand, to see clearly that, if the Scriptures be a revelation from heaven, as he firmly believed, they must be the only rule of faith and manners, he followed them with child-like simplicity, not knowing whither they might lead, and arrived at the glorious result which we have endeavoured faintly and imperfectly to describe. It was not Zwingli who overthrew Popery in Zurich, but the word of God in the hand of Zwingli; it was this which thrust out one after another the human inventions which had not merely obscured, but had actually displaced the word of God; it was with this that the reformer of Zurich cleansed the Augean stable, and imparted to the infant Protestant church in Zurich the distinguishing features of the apostolic age.

It is to the union of this spirit of free inquiry, with an implicit submission to the word of God, that we have to trace the superiority of the reformation in Switzerland to the reformation in Germany. Merle d'Aubigné has remarked, that it was a leading principle with Luther that he would not "depart from the doctrines and customs of the Romish church unless when the words of Scripture made it absolutely necessary;" in other words, what the Scriptures did not expressly condemn he would suffer to remain. The Swiss

reformer, on the contrary, in a bolder spirit, a spirit worthy of the free country in which he was born, cast himself loose from the doctrines and ceremonies of the church, and rejected everything in both which the Scriptures did not manifestly authorise. "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall you diminish from it,"* are words which, judging from his conduct, were ever present to his mind; and the happiest results followed from the adoption of the principle which they express. The Church of Rome needed not merely to be purified, but to undergo an entire reformation. Its ceremonies and its doctrines were alike contrary to the mind of God; the former were in truth the visible representations of the latter, —in substance they were one and the same. Both needed to be swept away by the relentless hand of truth, that the will of God might be supreme, and a truly spiritual temple might be reared "according to the pattern which God hath showed to us" in his word. Thus did Zwingli; thus also did our Scottish reformers, Knox and Melville, applying still more unsparingly the great principle of their renowned predecessor, to the glory of their divine Master, and the unspeakable benefit of this once happy and truly Protestant country. Would Luther have broached, and, with so much pertinacity, maintained, the unscriptural dogma respecting the real presence in the Eucharist, which created so wide a breach between Zwingli and him, if he had acted on the simple and truly rational principle which guided his fellow-labourer in his glorious course? We think not. He would have seen consubstantiation to be as contrary to Scripture and right reason as transubstantiation, and every vestige of Popery would have

* Deut. iv. 2.

disappeared before the great ruling principle, "What saith the Lord."

REFORMATION IN BERNE, ETC.

Before proceeding to treat of Geneva, we shall take a brief view of the progress of the Reformation in the cantons, to which we have not yet directed your attention.

The Reformation did not make equal progress in every part of Switzerland. Among the secondary causes which hindered this good work, may be mentioned the independence of the cantons, and the practice of lending their aid for money, as allies or auxiliaries, to the pope and other foreign princes. Swiss valour was estimated at the highest price. The pope left no efforts untried for securing and maintaining the Swiss in his party, with the twofold object of preserving them in their adherence to the Church of Rome, and of employing them as the instruments of his temporal aggrandisement. It was not in every canton that God was pleased to raise up a Zwingli, an Œcolampadius, a Farel, or a Calvin; and, though the doctrine of the Reformation had its trophies even in places where the power and influence of popery was most triumphant; the victory, as was to be expected, was in some instances on the side of error in opposition to truth, and of the love of money and plunder in opposition to true independence and enlightened patriotism. The cantons which adhered to the pope's party, and aided him with troops, continued Catholic, and remain to this day the victims of their own and their fathers' unbelief.

We have remarked, that Zwingli gave the right direction to the work of the Reformation in other parts of Switzerland. By his learning, his piety, and his Christ-

ian prudence and moderation, he exerted an influence over his countrymen which no foreigner, not even Luther himself, could be expected to possess. Accordingly, the men who were the chief instruments of advancing the Reformation in the other, and especially the German cantons, not only embraced the simple and comprehensive principle to which we have particularly referred, but, in all their contests, sought the advice and were encouraged by the correspondence, of this great and good man.

The work of the Reformation was hastened at Berne by the determination of the Popish cantons, Lucerne, Schwytz, Uri, Unterwalden, Fribourg, and Zug, no longer to sit in diet with Zurich. It behoved the Bernese to resolve whether they should range themselves on the Romish or Protestant side. The preaching of Wittembach, which had made so deep an impression on the youthful mind of Zwingli, was not without its fruit. Berthold, Haller, and Meyer joined him as the heralds of the same glorious gospel. They turned the minds of the Bernese to the only foundation of a sinner's hope; taught them that the merits of a monastic life are imaginary; presented Christianity to their view in all its Scriptural simplicity, and, by the force of truth and the Divine blessing, obtained the victory. After a struggle between the two parties, in which the issue often appeared doubtful, and the Bernese seemed inclined to pursue a middle course, the council at length declared in favour of Protestantism, and that distinguished canton was added to those who had thrown off the yoke of the Roman pontiff.

At Basel, Haus-schein, better known by his Greek name Æcolampadius, was the chief instrument of effecting the Reformation. He was invited to that city by Christopher van Utenheim, bishop of Basel, a man who,

like Erasmus, believed it possible to purify and amend the Church of Rome, and thus avoid the necessity of that radical change which the German Reformers and Zwingli were engaged in accomplishing. Æcolampadius became devotedly attached to the bishop, and might have been tempted to pursue the timid course which he proposed to him, had he not, in the providence of God, been called to Augsburg, in 1518, soon after the famous conference between Luther and the papal legate, and while that city was still under the excitement produced by it. Æcolampadius was under the necessity of deciding; and declared in favour of Luther. Harassed by the opposition which this declaration stirred up against him, he retired into a monastery. There, avowing his attachment to the grand principle of the Reformation, the paramount authority of the Word of God, he was in imminent danger of losing his life. He was invited by Capito to return to Basel: he arrived there in 1522, and some time after, was appointed vicar of St Martin's, and every time he preached was attended by a crowded audience; insomuch that Erasmus, who was at that time residing in Basel, exclaimed, "Æcolampadius carries all before him here!" Caspar Hedio, a native of Baden in Suabia, succeeded Capito, the friend and fellow-labourer of Æcolampadius; and, notwithstanding the chilling influence of the timid and temporising policy of Erasmus, the ministrations of these learned and good men were, through the Divine blessing, the means of effecting in Basel a thorough reformation from Popery.

Not long after these memorable transactions at Berne and Basel, the Pays de Vaud received the word of God. A war between the Bernese and the Duke of Savoy, materially contributed to this happy change, by transferring to the Bernese the greater part of the sovereignty

of the Pays de Vaud. To the honour of the Bernese, they made it their first care, after these acquisitions, to introduce into the conquered territories the doctrine of the Reformation.* They stationed ministers in the principal towns, and authorised them to preach in the adjacent country, enjoining that they should be heard without molestation, wherever an audience was willing to listen to them. Viret was stationed at Lausanne, and other ministers of less note in the history of the Reformation, at Granson, Verdun, Thonon, Vevay, and Lutry. Public discussions were held—the property of the church and religious houses was, after allowances to the present tenants, devoted to the instruction of the people, the education of youth, and the support of the poor. On the 24th December 1536, an edict was passed, establishing the Reformed religion, not, however, without a mixture of rigour against the adherents of the Church of Rome, arising, as in other places at that period, from ignorance of the principles of an enlightened toleration. This important revolution was accomplished without bloodshed, excepting the murder of a Genevese Reformed minister, and the execution of the murderers.

Lausanne, the chief town in that canton, stands eminently conspicuous in the history of these events. It appears that even during the war with the Bernese, Viret preached there with acceptance, the council permitting as many as pleased to hear him. After the Bernese obtained possession of the district, a disputation was, by their authority, held in the cathedral church, which lasted for eight successive days, and was conducted on the part of the Reformed by Farel, Viret, and Peter Caroli, who afterwards proved unsound, and reverted to Popery. Calvin also was present, and spoke

* Scott's Continuation of Milner, vol. iii.

twice on the subject of the sacrament. On the other side, the canons of Lausanne only protested against the meeting and withdrew; none of the clergy of the place, secular or regular, took any part in the dispute. The principal spokesman on the Romish side was Claude Blancherose, a French physician at Lausanne, "which," says Mr Scott, "gave occasion to Farel to remark, that the priests certainly felt their cause to be in a sickly state, seeing they had given it up into the hands of the doctor." The disputation operated powerfully in favour of the Reformation. Several persons who had taken part in the discussion were convinced by the arguments of the Reformers, and joined their party; one of them a Franciscan, declared his conviction before the assembly, and begged pardon of God for the opposition he had given to the truth, and of the people, for having misled them. In less than a month the citizens of Lausanne openly embraced the Reformation. Caroli was appointed their first pastor; but shortly thereafter, on his relapsing into Popery, he was succeeded by Viret, who, excepting for a short interval, in which he supplied Calvin's place at Geneva, continued in that position till 1559, when he complied with an invitation to remove to Lyons, where, we are informed, he was "the instrument of the conversion of thousands."

Passing over the history of the Reformation in the other Protestant cantons, on which the information furnished is extremely scanty, we shall now proceed to direct your attention more particularly to the beginning and progress of the work in Geneva.

REFORMATION IN GENEVA.

Farel was unquestionably the chief instrument, in

the hand of God, of effecting the Reformation at Geneva. Calvin, in one of his letters, calls him justly, "the father of the Genevese Church, and the father of Genevese liberty." It is true, that ten years previous to the arrival of Farel at Geneva, Francis Lambert,—who was expelled from a monastery at Avignon, for having Luther's works in his possession,—did preach the Scripture doctrine at Geneva, so far as he understood and embraced it; but apparently with little fruit. It was not until 1531, when Farel and Saunier visited Geneva, and preached the gospel there, that the doctrine of the Reformation appears to have made any considerable progress. A variety of causes seemed to retard, and render almost hopeless, the blessed change which had taken place in other portions of Switzerland. The political condition of Geneva,—no less than three different parties claiming jurisdiction within it, namely, the citizens, the bishop, and the duke of Savoy,—the superstition and bigotry of the inhabitants, and the dissoluteness of their manners, presented the most formidable obstacles to the faithful preaching of the gospel. A man of no ordinary faith, and courage, and perseverance, was required to preach the gospel of peace in the midst of so much discord, and to set his face like a flint against the soul-destroying errors and gross immorality of the Genevese. Such was William Farel, the father of the Reformation at Geneva.

William Farel was one of the sons of a noble family of that name, residing at Farel, near Gap, in Dauphiny. He was born in 1489. His parents were blind, bigoted Romanists; and young Farel threw himself, with the impetuosity which was one of the most striking features in his character, into their superstitious practices. But his active, ardent mind could not be restrained within

these narrow limits: he longed for light—he asked to be allowed to study. His father reluctantly yielded to his importunities. After having acquired all the knowledge which his own province could supply, he went, in 1510, to Paris, whither the fame of the university, or rather, the unseen hand of that Divine Being, who destined him to be the honoured instrument of unspeakable blessing to another land, attracted him.

Among the doctors of the Sorbonne, was one Lefevre, who taught as a doctor in theology,—a man who, though yet a Romanist, rose far superior to the prejudices and false philosophy of the age; and at the time of Farel's arrival in Paris, not only endeavoured to revive the study of the languages and the learning of ancient times, but went to the Bible, and re-established the study of the Holy Scriptures. With this man Farel formed an intimate acquaintance; and, after seeking the light and rest for which he longed, in the philosophy of the schools, in meditations on the lives of the saints, and in the works of the doctors of later times, he had recourse to the Holy Scriptures. The truth was beginning to obtain an entrance into the mind of old Lefevre; he perceived the grandeur of God's word; and, throwing aside the foolish legends which had hitherto occupied too much of his attention, he betook himself in earnest to Holy Scripture. When the light had made its way into his own heart, he imparted the knowledge of it to his scholars. The doctrine of justification by faith, Luther's *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiæ*, was, without concert with Luther, openly announced in the Sorbonne, by Lefevre, as early as the year 1512. Farel eagerly listened to these instructions: they took possession of his soul. He now found what he had long desired, and

sought in vain. The truth was revealed to him in all its intrinsic beauty and consistency: he embraced it sincerely and decidedly. As the light shined into his soul, the errors of Popery disappeared. The last of them, the invocation of the saints, after a terrible mental struggle, was renounced. Jesus alone appeared to him the proper object of adoration; and, to use his own words, "then the popedom was utterly subverted: I began to detest it as diabolical, and the holy word of God had the first place in my heart."

Farel diligently applied himself to the study of the Scriptures in the original tongues, and in process of time taught in the college of Cardinal Lemoine, in Paris, and was aiding to Lefevre in disseminating the knowledge of the truth among the students who frequented that great city. After a succession of interesting events in his life, which do not properly come within the scope of this lecture, Farel, driven by persecution from France, came to Basel, and was affectionately received by Æcolampadius. A short time thereafter, he preached with great acceptance and success at Montbéliard, Neufchâtel, Aigle, Morat, Lausanne, and Vallengin; and, at the instance of the council of Berne, in the month of September 1532, he visited Geneva, along with Anthony Saunier, also a native of Dauphiny. There they had repeated conferences with the friends of the Reformation. The Romish ecclesiastics took the alarm, and but, for the protection of the senate, would have proceeded to violence. In the end Farel and his companion were commanded to leave the city, which they did, and returned to Orbe and Granson.* Their place, however, was soon supplied by Anthony Froment,

* Scott's Continuation, vol. iii.

like the two former, a native of Dauphiny. He was a young man of only twenty-three years of age, for some time a disciple of Farel, and a companion of his travels and sufferings. Him Farel with difficulty persuaded to go to Geneva, to disseminate the knowledge of divine truth. Under pretext of teaching a school, and practising medicine, he drew around him a considerable number of young persons and adults, and took occasion to introduce to their notice the truths of the gospel. Many were deeply impressed by his discourses, applied themselves to the examination of the Scriptures, learned to separate the wheat from the chaff, the doctrines of God's word from human inventions, and were prepared for the reception of the gospel, not in word only, but in power.

Froment was aided in this good work by one Bouquet, a Franciscan, who, though a Protestant in heart, preached with so much caution, that both parties alike went to hear him, and who, when the success of Froment had occasioned his being driven from the city, felt his responsibility, and became more open and decided in the avowal of his sentiments, exposed the doctrine of the mass, irritated the ecclesiastics, and in the end was obliged to leave Geneva.

It seems surprising, that two or three months after these events, the council publicly allowed the introduction of the New Testament in the French, the vernacular language of Geneva. The version admitted is supposed to have been that of Olivetan, published at Neufchâtel, in 1535, the first French Bible printed in Switzerland.

Froment attempted to return to Geneva, but very nearly lost his life in the attempt. Farel also yielded to an invitation to revisit the city, but was so ill treated, that he was compelled to withdraw. Notwithstand-

ing, the friends of the Reformation in Geneva kept their ground. They held their meetings by night, prayed, and read and expounded the Scriptures, and even celebrated the Lord's supper,—employing John Guerin, a pious tradesman, as the distributor of the elements. The Romanists were enraged, and excited tumults against the reformed, which had well nigh ended in bloodshed. The bishop of Geneva, having united with the duke of Savoy, and thereby increased his power and influence, availed himself of this favourable opportunity for strengthening the cause of the Church of Rome, but by an extreme exercise of his authority injured, instead of promoting it. He addressed letters and episcopal mandates to the city, prohibiting any changes to be made in the accustomed mode of preaching; prohibiting, also, the reading of the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue, and commanding all persons who possessed copies of the Scriptures in French or German, "to burn them immediately, under pain of excommunication." The council resisted this exercise of episcopal power, and issued an order, "that only the gospel should be preached, and nothing delivered from the pulpit which could not be proved from Scripture;" and thus, in spite of the opposition of the priests, or, rather, by means of that opposition, the word of God "grew mightily and prevailed."

Guy Furbiti, a Dominican, having created a considerable ferment by his invectives against the reformers at Geneva, the Bernese took up the quarrel, and insisted on the holding of a public disputation, in which, after some hesitation, Furbiti consented to enter into discussion with Farel or Viret, or both. The disputation not only produced a favourable impression with regard to the Protestant doctrine, but afforded

Farel, Viret, and Froment, the occasion for which they longed so earnestly, of preaching the word to the Genevese. They did so constantly in their lodgings. This subjected them to the reproach of holding conventicles; and the deputies from Berne, hearing of this complaint, urged the council to give them the use of a church. The council represented to them that they could not authorise, but neither would they oppose this request. Accordingly, on Sunday the 1st March 1534, Farel was conducted by a numerous body of the citizens to the church of the Franciscans, where he publicly preached for the first time in Geneva the doctrine of the Reformation. His ministrations, and those of Froment and Viret, issued in a rapid advancement of the cause of truth. Many openly declared their adhesion to the Protestant faith, among whom were three out of the four syndics and a majority of the council; men began to be convinced that the time of its full and final establishment was not far distant.

At length the death-blow was given to Popery in Geneva by a disputation which was held at the instance of James Bernard, who, from being a zealous defender of the Romish faith, had been led by Farel to a conviction of his errors, and thought that a public disputation, such as had been held elsewhere, might be productive of good effects at Geneva. He proposed to maintain against all who might choose to come forward the following theses:—"1. That justification is to be sought only in Jesus Christ, and not in our own works. 2. That religious worship is to be offered only to God, and that the adoration of the saints and of images is idolatrous. 3. That the Church is to be governed by the word of God alone, and that human traditions are both vain and pernicious. 4. That the

sacrifice of Christ is the sole and sufficient offering for sin; and that the sacrifice of the mass and prayers for the dead are contrary to God's word. 5. That Jesus Christ is our only Mediator; and that the doctrine of the intercession of the saints has been introduced by human authority alone." With the full approbation of the council the disputation was held in the great hall of the Franciscans, and lasted from the 30th May to the 24th of June,—Bernard, assisted by Farel and Viret, taking the lead on the one side, and Peter Caroli, then a Romanist, and a doctor of the Sorbonne, and Chapuis, a Dominican of Geneva, on the other. Both acknowledged themselves vanquished, and declared publicly their conversion to the Reformed faith. Almost the whole city, including many ecclesiastics, united with them, and the greater council of two hundred being formally summoned to take the question of religion into consideration, after an eloquent address from Farel followed by a fervent prayer for Divine direction, issued a general edict on the 27th of August 1535, enjoining public worship to be conducted according to the rules of the gospel, and prohibiting all Popish idolatry. "From that time forth," says Mr Scott, "Farel and his colleagues preached without restraint, administered the sacraments, and performed marriages, and every kind of religious services in all the churches; and henceforth the mass was no more publicly celebrated in Geneva."

Soon after these events the Genevese were, after a short struggle, confirmed in the enjoyment of their liberties and their independence of the Duke of Savoy, and availed themselves of this to carry forward the work of reformation. In conjunction with the government, Farel and his fellow-labourers in the ministry, amidst great discords and heart-burnings, regulated the times

and places of public worship, provided for four pastors and two assistants, commanded the Sabbath to be strictly observed, enacted laws against profaneness and licentiousness, established a college for the education of youth, at the head of which Anthony Saunier was placed—adopted means for spreading the Reformation in the rural districts of the canton, and drew up and published a confession of faith which was sanctioned by the council in the month of November 1536.

In that year, the celebrated John Calvin arrived in Geneva. I shall not attempt even a sketch of the earlier part of his life; in the *first* place, because it is almost universally known; and, *secondly*, because it would swell to too large a bulk this memoir. I proceed at once to mention, that returning from Italy from a visit to the Duchess of Ferrara, a distinguished patroness of religion and learning, the war compelled him, contrary to his intention, to travel towards Basel through Dauphiny and Savoy. On coming to Geneva, he visited Farel and Viret. They urged him to remain and share their labours; and, on his resisting their proposal, Farel, with characteristic impetuosity, addressed him thus:—"I take upon me to announce to you, in the name of Almighty God, that, if you thus, under the pretext of prosecuting your studies, refuse to labour with us in the work of the Lord, his curse will rest upon you, as a man that seeks his own, and not the things of Jesus Christ." Calvin was persuaded by Farel's urgency, and surrendering himself to the disposal of the consistory and magistrates of Geneva, he was appointed a professor of divinity, and soon after, with the consent of the people, a pastor of the church,—events productive of the most important consequences to Geneva and the world.

In so great a change of religious opinions and profession as took place at the reformation from Popery, it was not to be supposed that all who embraced the doctrines of the Reformation were men of an enlightened and true faith, and really converted to God. Many, no doubt, were acted upon by sympathy, others by disgust at the frivolous ceremonies of Romanism, and the profligacy of the priesthood, some among the magistrates and wealthier classes by a wish to gain possession of the property of the Romish church, and perhaps a still greater number by a love of liberty, and a desire to escape from the intellectual thraldom under which they and their fathers had groaned. Such men, it is evident, might willingly, nay eagerly, make profession of the Reformed faith, and at the same time be very reluctant to place themselves practically and unreservedly under the yoke of Christ's commandments.

Thus it was in Geneva when Calvin arrived and resolved to labour among them. The Anabaptists began to show themselves in the city. That sect, however, was speedily suppressed. The charge of Arianism by Peter Caroli, the apostate already mentioned, was, in like manner, soon disposed of. But the greatest difficulty the Reformers experienced in the exercise of a wholesome discipline for checking the licentious manners and habits of the Genevese. In the prosecution of this important object, the ministers were opposed by the people and council; and, on the 23d of April 1838, an order was passed, first by the Little Council, then by the Grand Council, and, finally, by the assembly of the people, for the banishment of Farel, Calvin, and Courault,—Calvin, on being informed of the decree, observing, "Had I been the servant of men, I must have complained of being ill requited; but it is well

for me that I have served one who never deserts those who devote themselves to him." The bad spirit of the Genevese continued after his expulsion, and Saunier, Cordier, and other friends of Farel and Calvin, met with similar treatment in the Christmas following.

Calvin proceeded to Strasburg, Farel to Neufchâtel: Courault died soon after his extrusion. The hopes of the Romanists revived. A letter was addressed to them by Cardinal Sadolet, in which nothing was omitted which might induce them to return to the Church of Rome. Calvin, who had repeatedly addressed to his deserted flock wise and paternal letters, replied to Sadolet's address with such force of eloquence and argument as left the cardinal little or no hope of success. The Genevese continued stedfast in their rejection of the Romish faith.

In the all-wise providence of God events took place which opened the way for the return of Calvin to Geneva. Of the four syndics who had taken the lead in his expulsion, one was executed for murder, a second, endeavouring to escape apprehension for sedition, fell from the town wall, and died; the other two were banished for having betrayed the interests of the city. Calvin was urged by Bernard and Viret to return; the pastors of Zurich seconded their solicitations; an honourable deputation was sent from the Council of Geneva with the same request: the decree of banishment was rescinded. Calvin, after some delay, returned on the 13th September 1541, and was honourably and joyfully received. Farel, though included in the decree, remained at Neufchâtel.

Calvin's banishment had not in the least degree affected his determination to maintain a strict scriptural discipline over his flock. Addressing the council he

told them plainly that, if they desired to have him for their minister, they must correct the disorders of their lives—that they must either command him to abandon their town a second time—or re-establish the pure discipline of the church, and condemn their vices to a perpetual banishment. One of his first cares, therefore, after his return, was to procure the establishment of a regular ecclesiastical polity, including the power of censure and excommunication, without which he declared himself incapable of duly discharging his ministry. This proposal met with considerable resistance, but Calvin carried his point, and the Presbyterian form of discipline was established, and received the sanction of the people. A new catechism was also prepared by him, which met with remarkable acceptance, insomuch, that, before Beza wrote his life, it had been translated into seven different languages. In 1542, Geneva received many Protestants from France, refugees from persecution, to whom, as might be expected, Calvin, himself a native of France, and driven from his country by the same cause, showed the utmost attention and kindness. They, on the other hand, by their stedfast profession, and consistent conduct, strengthened the hands of their Genevese brethren, and forwarded the work of reformation. To his incessant labours in the ministry, he added the publication of numerous and voluminous works, and an extensive correspondence with foreign churches. It is almost incredible that so much could be accomplished by one individual. Nor is it wonderful, that, after more than twenty years of incessant mental exertion, his bodily health, never robust, continued to fail, until, on the 27th May 1564, he fell asleep in Jesus. Apprehending the near approach of death, he wished once more to address the senate in

their hall. They, out of tenderness to him, proposed to meet with him in his own house; which they did accordingly next day. He took them to witness, that he had delivered purely and sincerely the work with which he was put in trust; thanked them for their forbearance; reminded them of their duty to God, if they would have the republic to continue safe; besought them to pardon his infirmities; and having prayed that the Almighty God would shower down upon them the gifts of his grace, he shook hands with each of them; and they took leave of him with tears, "parting from him as from a common parent."*

On the following day he addressed the ministers in language having peculiar reference to the duties of their office, and with the same meekness and humility as respected himself; and they also "took leave of him," says Beza, "with sad hearts, and by no means with dry eyes."

On a review of these brief sketches of the Reformation in Switzerland, one cannot fail being struck with the perfection of the great work which Zwingli, as the instrument in the hand of God, commenced, and Calvin consummated, and with the remarkable agreement of the Swiss reformers on all the essential doctrines of their common faith. It was no partial amendment, no mere purification, which they effected: it was an entire change of principle and doctrine. They were not servile imitators of one another; but, taking the Bible and the whole Bible as their guide, they were, with a few exceptions, of one heart and one mind regarding the faith of the gospel, and the service and worship of God.

* Scott's Continuation, vol. iii.

Beholding in the same mirror the glory of the Lord, they were changed into the same image; and feeling the obligation to comply with all that the Lord commanded them, they left no part of the old system unreformed—no portion of the spiritual temple unrestored. The form of sound words was set forth in all its beauty and harmony; and the people of Switzerland, hearing their pastors speaking the same things, and agreeing in one judgment, were confirmed in the persuasion, that, in embracing the doctrine of God's word, they were not following cunningly-devised fables, but were receiving the truth of the living God.

In one particular we are constrained to admit that the Swiss reformers, in common with all, or almost all, the great and good men of that age, failed to perceive the mind of God. They did not understand the true principles of religious toleration; although, as Dr M'Crie justly observes, their Christian feelings generally prevented them from following practically their erroneous views. The error of almost all the Swiss reformers consisted in this—that, because Scripture hath declared it to be the duty of the civil magistrate to countenance, and, in his place, to encourage the true religion, therefore, by his authority as a civil magistrate, he ought to put down by force heresy and error. They did not see clearly the line of demarcation between the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, nor at all times apprehend the vast importance of keeping them separate and distinct. In the case of Bertelier,* when the senate, contrary to their former deeds and oaths, decreed that to them it should belong to give final judgment in matters of ex-

* Scott's Continuation, vol. iii. p. 446.

communication, and to absolve whom it pleased them, Calvin, with his usual firmness, said, "Before this decree take place, either my blood or banishment shall sign it." Yet neither he nor the mild and gentle Zwingli remonstrated as they ought against the violent proceedings of the governments of Zurich and Geneva towards men convicted or suspected of heresy. Would that we could say, with regard to the well-known case of Servetus, that Calvin did nothing more than give his opinion! History acquits him of the fierceness and malignity of the ignorant blood-thirsty persecutor: his error, and it was great, was an error in judgment, not in heart.

The evil consequences of thus confounding the civil with the ecclesiastical power in matters of religion, are felt by the churches in Switzerland to the present day. Republicanism is not that free form of government which many theorists have imagined. Where the population is small, it is almost sure to degenerate into an oligarchy; where it is large, the voice of the multitude too often prevails over law and justice. Thus it has been with the Protestant states of Switzerland. When the masses of the people ceased to be religious, they could not endure the sound doctrine of their faithful evangelical pastors,—the populace insulted them, the rulers in council imprisoned or banished them. It is only when Christ rules supreme in his own house, and the civil magistrate confines himself strictly to his own province, that religious liberty is safe, whether under one form of government or another. A great prince is reported to have said, and his words ought to be written on the door of every council-room, and every court of justice, "My kingdom ends where that of conscience begins." Happy the people, happy the church and the

country, where this great principle is recognised and practically observed.

STATE OF EVANGELICAL RELIGION IN SWITZERLAND AFTER THE REFORMATION.

M. Merle d'Aubigné has justly remarked, that "the fall of a stone is not more natural, than is the tendency of the individual, and of the church, to turn aside from the living God." When, with the exception of one small spot on the surface of the earth, the whole world was overspread with midnight darkness, God was pleased to send his own Son to be the light of the world, and by the ministry of Christ and his apostles, to reveal the New Testament dispensation in all its healing and life-giving power; a church was taken from among the Gentiles; in a very short space of time the knowledge of the truth was imparted to a large portion of the then known world; the heathen oracles ceased to utter their responses; the mighty fabric of heathen idolatry fell to the ground; the gospel, in its converting power, was felt in many a land; and the pleasing prospect was presented, of the permanent universal establishment of the reign of Messiah in every part of the earth. But the time, "the set time," was not come, for the accomplishment of that glorious event. It was to be made more glorious still, by the victory which the King of Zion was to achieve over systems of error and superstition, more artfully contrived, and perhaps more deeply rooted, than paganism,—systems calling themselves Christian, but as far removed from Christianity in their principles and their spirit, as the heathenism which the preaching of God's word had so recently subverted and

destroyed. Even in the days of the apostles, the first of these mysteries of iniquity had begun to work in the church of Christ—the purity of the Christian faith was obscured by the principles and maxims of a false philosophy—vital godliness declined—each century, as it revolved, brought in some new corruption in the doctrine and worship of God, until at length the Man of Sin, having arrived at the fulness of his stature, stood forth in all the hideousness and deformity which the light of the Reformation was destined to expose.

Times of refreshing came from the presence of the Lord. His Spirit was poured out, nearly at one and the same period on men in various countries where the Romish Antichrist reigned. They asked for the "old ways,"—they sought for them in the infallible records of God's Word,—they cast off the slough of a corrupted Christianity, vital religion once more began to prevail; and good men were again encouraged to hope that the time was near when the whole earth should be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, and the name of Christ should be glorious from the rising to the setting sun.

It is not from want of power in the King of Zion that these fair and pleasing prospects have not been realised. The truth is, it is not easy to determine in what circumstances the Divine power in the church is most signally displayed, whether in preserving a small remnant of faithful and holy men in times of almost universal apostacy and wickedness, and in causing the fruits of righteousness to spring forth and be matured amidst the briers and thorns of human corruption; or in that wonderful triumph which he shall one day achieve when Satan shall be shut up in the bottomless pit, and shall deceive the nations no more, and pure

and undefiled Christianity shall everywhere prevail, and the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ. It is the will of God that we should judge of his infinite power and wisdom in his church, as much by the difficulties and obstacles which it surmounts, as by the rapidity of the conquests effected by Christ and his faithful followers in Him. "The law entered that sin might abound:" that "where sin abounded grace might much more abound." The Sun of Righteousness arose upon the Gentile nations that they might be "without excuse,"—if they rejected the gospel: men sinned against that light, and became more impiously wicked than their fathers, that the power and goodness of a righteous and merciful God might again be seen in the awakening of the spiritually dead to life, in the resurrection of his faithful witnesses, and the vindication of his own truth and cause in the world.

The Romish Antichrist was not overthrown by the Reformation. The beast received a deadly wound with a sword, but continued to live. In many countries in Christendom, Popery has continued and still continues to subsist in all the plenitude of its former power, so far at least, as respects the minds and consciences of the people,—the same false doctrine is professed—the same idolatry practised—the same superstitious reverence is entertained for a seducing and tyrannical priesthood. And in the unsearchable wisdom of God, another Antichrist has been permitted to arise in the heart of Protestantism;—infidelity, in the form of a proud and open rejection of Christianity, and in the less repulsive forms of Arianism, Socinianism, and German neology, demonstrates anew the tendency of the human heart to depart from the living God, and is preparing the world for that most glorious of all the victories of

the Prince of Peace, in which Antichrist in all its forms shall be overcome, and Christ, and the saints of Christ shall reign in the earth.

We shall commence our notices respecting the state of religion in Switzerland after the Reformation, with Geneva, one of the least populous of the cantons, but one which, from its vicinity to France, the fame of Farel and Calvin and their immediate successors, and other circumstances to which we shall have occasion to allude, occupies a larger space in the eye of the church historian, than any other portion of that interesting country.

Beza succeeded Calvin in the professor's chair and in the ministry at Geneva, and fully maintained the reputation which it had already acquired. He was followed by men of the same principles, among whom may be mentioned particularly, the elder Turretine and Pictet. Vital religion and a sound theology continued to prosper, the one, no doubt, lending its aid to the preservation and progress of the other. The tendency to corruption in doctrine and morals was happily retarded by the influx of thousands of persecuted Protestants from France and elsewhere, down to the end of the seventeenth century.* Attachment to the Protestant doctrine, and a decided opposition to Popery were kept alive by the presence, and sufferings, and steadfastness, and godly life of their persecuted fellow-Christians; so that until the first quarter of the eighteenth century had elapsed, there does not appear to have been any very signal departure from the purity and simplicity of Protestant faith and manners. From that period, however, Geneva began rapidly to decline, and the minis-

* It is a remarkable fact, that all the present members of the committee of the Evangelical Society of Geneva are descendants of refugees.

ters and professors of the city of Farel and Calvin, one of the most distinguished nurseries of the Reformation, misled by the delusive lights of an infidel philosophy, putting their own reason in the place of revelation, and subjecting the truth of God's word to its fallible and erring judgments, deliberately thrust out every one of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity from what they still continued to call the Protestant faith, and substituted the lifeless body of Arianism for the animating truths of the gospel of Christ.

The eighteenth century may justly be termed the winter of Protestantism. The Spirit of God seems to have withdrawn his genial life-giving influences—the Sun of Righteousness, obscured by the clouds of infidel and heretical opinions, ceased in a great measure to put forth his fructifying power. In Germany, in England, and even in our own highly-favoured country, men appeared to have lost their relish for the pure and unadulterated word of God. Instead of the words of Christ, which alone are "spirit and life," to the dead soul of unconverted man, men were fed with a cold and jejune morality: nothing was ministered to their souls which could convince them of sin, or comfort them under affliction, or urge them to a life of holiness. In many places, the divinity of our Saviour, the reality and efficacy of his atonement, the necessity of the work of the Spirit, were openly impugned. The churches were deserted, the Sabbath was profaned, the plainest principles and laws of morality were violated, and professing Protestants seemed to imagine that they had been rescued from the yoke of Popish tyranny, only that they might indulge in impiety and licentiousness.

Nowhere was this mournful defection more strikingly manifested than in the city of Geneva.

For preserving uniformity and perpetuity in the profession of the Protestant faith, the government and people of Geneva had publicly and solemnly sanctioned the catechism of Calvin, mentioned in a former part of this lecture—the Helvetic Confession, and, more recently, a document called the *Consensus*, prepared and agreed to at the synod of Dort. At the commencement of the eighteenth century, the obligation to sign these formulas was, at the instance of Alphonse Turretine, abrogated, but illegally, because without consent of the people. This was the commencement of that downward progress to which I have referred. The alluring and pernicious writings of Voltaire and Rousseau, and their residence for some time in the neighbourhood of Geneva, by perverting the principles and corrupting the morals of the inhabitants, gave additional force to the evil tendency of ministers and professors; till, as we have stated, every vestige of a pure Protestantism was effaced, and the glory departed from the city, which the Spirit of God, by the instrumentality of its great and much honoured Reformers, had revived and sanctified. The following facts, will appear, to every candid reader, to furnish abundant proof of this charge.

In a volume of the French Encyclopædia, published about the middle of last century, D'Alembert, on the part of the French infidels, claimed the pastors of Geneva as their auxiliaries in the assault which was being made by them against Christianity. He represented them as men who had taken from Christianity every thing which distinguished it from a merely philosophical system, and in general terms approved of its morality, but suppressed or cast aside all its peculiar doctrines. "Purgatory," he says, "which has been one of the principal causes of the separation from the Church

of Rome, is now the only punishment, that many of them admit, after death. To say all in one word, many of the pastors of Geneva have no other religion but a perfect Socinianism, rejecting all that they call mysteries." The pastors complained of, and in vain attempted to answer and refute these charges. Rousseau reiterated and maintained them. "We ask," he says, "of the ministers of the Church of Geneva, if Jesus Christ be God? They dare not answer. A philosopher with a glance of the eye penetrates their character. He sees them to be Arians, Socinians, Deists—he proclaims it and thinks he does them honour. They are alarmed, terrified; they come together, they discuss, they are in agitation, they know not to which of the saints they should turn, and after earnest consultations, deliberations, conferences, all vanishes in an *amphigouri*, (logomachy), and they neither say yes, nor no. O Genevans, these gentlemen, your ministers, in truth, are very singular people! They do not know what they believe, or what they do not believe: they do not even know what they would wish to appear to believe. Their only manner of establishing their faith is to attack the faith of others."*

These formidable charges, these cutting sarcasms, did not produce, and could not be expected to produce, any change on the sentiments and false opinions of the pastors and professors of Geneva. In the academy the theological professors ceased to teach Christianity; they spoke to their pupils of Plato, and Socrates, and Cicero, and literally said nothing of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. The pastors preached as they were taught, and the people of Geneva loved to have it so.

* Haldane's Letter to Cheneviere, p. 135.

Until the commencement of the present century, there was little to distinguish the professors, and pastors, and polished inhabitants of Geneva, from a heathen city in the darkest and most heathen age.

But God would not leave this once highly-favoured city in this state of spiritual destitution. In his good pleasure he presented the signs of a second Reformation—a reformation from a false and misnamed Protestantism, to the knowledge and the faith of pure Christianity. Near the commencement of the present century, when the spirit of revival was poured out on our own and other countries, one or two ministers of Geneva began to preach the doctrine of salvation by faith in Christ Jesus, through the sovereign grace and mercy of God. The people listened with astonishment; some of them were irritated against the preachers; and one of these (Dr Malan) was interdicted and driven from Geneva. But the truth continued to excite attention, and, it is believed, savingly converted some to the faith and obedience of Christ. The pastors and professors apprehended the revival of evangelical doctrine and the subversion of their influence, and on the 3d of May 1817 ordained the following regulations to be signed by every minister before he should be allowed "to exercise the pastoral functions," and by every student, before he should be "set apart for the gospel ministry":—

"We promise, as long as we reside and preach in the canton of Geneva, to abstain from discussing, either in whole discourses, or in parts of our discourses, the subjoined topics:

"1*st*, The manner in which the Divine nature is united to the person of Jesus Christ.

"2*dly*, Original sin.

"3*dly*, The operation of grace, or effectual calling.

"*4thly*, Predestination.

"We engage also, not to oppose in our public discourses, the sentiments of any minister or pastor on these subjects.

"*Lastly*, We promise that, if we should be led to mention these topics, we will do so without expatiating on our own views, or departing more than is unavoidable from the words of the Holy Scriptures."*

The mention of the last three topics as doctrines which their ministers were forbidden to preach, affords sufficient proof, to those who are acquainted with the doctrine of the Geneva Reformers, that the Compagnie had entirely abjured the faith which these venerable men taught and professed; and with regard to the first, there is something extremely disingenuous in the manner in which they virtually prohibit the declaration of that mysterious, but most important and fundamental truth of Christianity—the doctrine of our Saviour's divinity. It was well known to every person in Geneva, that they never taught that doctrine in their pulpits or in their schools. It was not the "manner" of the union to which they objected, but the fact of the union of the Divine and human natures in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Before adverting to another mournful proof of the rejection of pure Christianity by the professors and pastors of Geneva, I am called to bear a willing tribute to the memory of a countryman of our own not long deceased, to whom, as one of the most eminent instru-

* Haldane's Letter, p. 85. It will scarcely be credited that these men proposed to celebrate, and did celebrate the third centenary of the Reformation in Geneva in 1835, and invited some of the Protestant churches, and among these the Church of Scotland, to send representatives to the festival.

ments under God of the late revival in Geneva, the Christian men of that city and canton owe a debt of gratitude which they have not been slow to acknowledge.

The person to whom I refer is Mr Robert Haldane. From the time when he was himself awakened, he felt a strong desire to impart the knowledge of the truth to others in his own and in foreign countries. Prevented by the timid and now happily altered policy of Britain from going to India with that object in view, he directed his attention to the Continent. He went thither about thirty years ago, chiefly, I believe we may say, entirely with the intention, if God should bless his labours, of reviving Protestantism and winning souls to Christ. As the best mode of accomplishing that end, he made it his endeavour wheresoever he travelled in France and Switzerland to gain the acquaintance and influence the minds of the so-called Protestant pastors. For some time he met with little success,—but, coming to Geneva, he was unexpectedly encouraged to remain there, as he himself states, by a visit from a young man a student in divinity, who called in place of M. Moulinié, one of the pastors in Geneva, to conduct Mr and Mrs Haldane to see a model of the mountains a little way out of town. With him Mr H. immediately entered into conversation on the subject of religion, on which he found him willing to receive information. The student returned with him to the inn, and remained till late at night. He came back next morning with another student equally ignorant with himself of the Bible and its precious truths. These two brought six others in the same state of mind, with whom Mr H. had many and long conversations. Their visits became so frequent that it was at length arranged that they should meet with him at a fixed hour, three times a-week, with

a view to conversation. Mr Haldane took the Epistle to the Romans as his text, and continued to expound that portion of Scripture during the whole of the winter of 1816–17, and until the termination of their studies in the following summer, during which period almost all the students in theology regularly attended. Besides these, some who did not wish to appear with the students came at different hours; and several of the inhabitants of Geneva, unconnected with the schools of learning, and of both sexes, occasionally visited him in the afternoon to receive instruction respecting the gospel.

The result of these truly Christian and beneficent efforts was, that out of eighteen students who attended, sixteen were truly converted. Several have entered into their Master's joy; the remainder, dispersed in different parts of the continent as pastors of congregations, are preaching with fidelity and ardour the uncorrupted gospel of Christ; and two of them, Dr Merle d'Aubigné, the well-known author of the History of the Reformation, and Dr Gaussen, ex-pastor of Satigny, and author of a recently published work on Inspiration, are professors in the new Theological College at Geneva. Besides these blessed fruits of Mr Haldane's self-denied and devoted efforts, a very considerable impression was made on the other inhabitants of Geneva; so great, as truly to amount to a revival of spiritual religion. In 1827, a venerable Christian layman, now deceased, referring to the happy change thus produced, told the author of this lecture, that, if Mr Haldane were then to revisit Geneva, he would not know it for the same place. The regulations of the Compagnie, mentioned in the preceding pages, owed their origin in a great measure to the

success which accompanied the labours of our much-honoured Scottish evangelist.

We return to the case of Dr Gaussen.

At the time of Mr Haldane's arrival in Geneva, he was ordained pastor; but was one of those who attended Mr Haldane's expositions and were savingly benefitted by them. Appointed to the parish of Satigny, a few miles distant from the town of Geneva, he devoted himself with the zeal and energy of one who knew the truth, and felt its power, to his pastoral duties. The Geneva catechism, (Calvin's,) one of the standards of the Protestant church there, and one of the best summaries of Christian doctrine, had, in a variety of successive editions, been gradually and surreptitiously altered, till every one of the great doctrines of Christianity, viz. the divinity of our Saviour, the fall of man, justification by faith, and regeneration by the Holy Spirit, were excluded, and it had become utterly useless, or rather pernicious as a book of elementary religious instruction, "so abstract and so dry, that it produced in the youth a disgust of religion, and never spoke to the heart."* Not long after M. Gaussen received the deep impressions of religion to which we have alluded, he ceased to teach this catechism to the youth of his congregation, or in his examinations with a view to the admission of communicants; and, that he might give the least offence possible to his colleagues, confined himself to expositions of the sacred Scriptures. He pursued this course for eleven years, having no other ambition, as himself declares, than to preach the gospel in the rural district in which his lot was cast, and to bring souls to the know-

* Lettres de M. Pasteur Gaussen à la Vénérable Compagnie, p. 5.

ledge of the Saviour—abstaining from controversy and from personalities, and contenting himself with publishing, in the least offensive manner, and in concert with his father and friend, the pastor Cellerier, an exposition of his faith, that his flock might know, from the time of his entrance into the ministry, what he believed, and what he preached.*

After performing in this manner the duties of a faithful minister for fourteen years, not, it is hoped and believed, without some seals of his ministry, the Compagnie, offended by the progress which evangelical religion and true piety were making in the town and canton of Geneva, and by the share which M. Gaussen had, as a servant of Christ, in effecting this blessed change, in the month of October 1830, whilst they acknowledged the numerous defects of their own catechism, and intimated to M. Gaussen that they were employed in correcting it, insisted on his resuming the use of it in the school of his parish, and in his own instructions; a demand which M. Gaussen mildly, but firmly and decidedly refused.†

* Lettres, pp. 12, 13.

† Dr Heugh, in his interesting work entitled *Notices of the State of Religion in Geneva and Belgium*, has inadvertently stated, at p. 82, that "Dr Gaussen consented to use the catechism, with the express understanding, that he should be allowed to teach also the doctrines which he believed;" and that the Company were encouraged by his submission, in regard to the catechism, to require him to withdraw the published letters referred to in the margin.

Dr Heugh appears to have been led into this mistake by M. Gaussen's letter of the 12th November 1830, (Lettres, &c. p. 71) in which he does not object to the *recital* of the obnoxious catechism—obnoxious, because deprived of the marrow and substance of gospel-truth—to children and catechumens in the school

This demand on the part of the Compagnie, and M. Gaussen's refusal, gave rise to proceedings against him, on the part of the Compagnie—the narrative of which presents on the one hand, one of the finest

or in the church, on occasion of the Sabbath catechising, but in which he expresses his persuasion that the Compagnie did not intend to abridge the liberty which he enjoyed of teaching his flock the great and fundamental truths on which the catechism was silent. The Compagnie, in their answer to M. Gaussen's letter, (Lettres, &c., p. 75) seem to have understood him as having made a much larger concession than his language expresses or implies. It is evident, from the subsequent letters of M. Gaussen, that nothing was farther from his intention than his consenting to use—that is, to teach the deistical catechism of the Compagnie. His refusal to do this was the origin of the whole process. To yield this vital point was to give up all. I have the authority of Dr Gaussen for saying, that he trusts he would rather have suffered death. "*J'ose bien dire que j'aurais plutot souffert la mort,*" than accept the catechism of the compagnie. His sentiments on this subject are expressed with great beauty and simplicity in the following passage:—

"Je sais bien que, pour les enfans de ma paroisse, il y aurait entre mes mains quelques remèdes à l'emploi du catechisme actuel. Je sais bien que je pourrais comme je l'ai fait quelques temps, en remplir les lacunes, en montrer les erreurs, en reparer les effets; je pourrais aussi le laisser réciter à quelques-uns des enfans, et n'en pas tenir plus de compte dans mes explications subséquentes que s'il n'en eût jamais été question. Il y aurait pour cela quelques remèdes.

"Mais si j'ai reçu le titre de ministre de Jésus Christ au milieu de mes concitoyens; mais si je suis de sa part une sentinelle en Israël; et si tandis que sa divinité fait la consolation et l'espérance de mon âme; si tandis que je sais qu'il n'y a de vie que dans la foi en son sang, si, au lieu de protester contre un livre qui méconnâit la divinité de mon Sauveur et le chemin de la vie, je venais à conniver avec l'erreur, en me laissant mettre ce livre entre les mains, pour l'aller moi-même porter ensuite aux en-

displays of argumentative eloquence, conjoined with Christian firmness and moderation, and, on the other, the most reckless disregard of common justice and the forms of law, which are anywhere to be found. In his letters to the Compagnie, M. Gaussen denies the right of the pastors to insist on his teaching any other catechism or formulary but those which had received the sanction of the state and people of Geneva—boldly claims as the minister of an established church, the liberty under laws (*ordonnances*) unrepealed and in force, of teaching his parishioners the truth of God according to the Scriptures and the recognised standards of the Church, and declares his determination to submit to any sacrifice, rather than betray his Master's cause and wound his conscience. The Compagnie, on the other hand, conscious of the weakness of their cause, conduct their discussions with shut doors, afford M. Gaussen no opportunity of defending himself, insist on his withdrawing the letters which he had been compelled to publish in his own defence, and on his refusing to comply with their demand, terminated their illegal and informal proceedings, by the following sentence:—

"1. M. Gaussen is censured.

fans de ma paroisse; alors pour cela, bientôt il n'y aurait plus de remède; je ne sérais pas net de leur sang; j'aurais á rendre compte d'avoir abandonné la cause de mes concitoyens, comme celle de mon Dieu; j'aurais renié mon Maitre devant les hommes."—Lettres, &c., pp. 53, 54.

M. Gaussen, for the sake of peace, and that he might continue to occupy the sphere of usefulness in which Providence had placed him, was willing, in obedience to the church-court to which he was subject, to permit the catechism of the Compagnie to be recited, but could not conscientiously teach it or recommend it to his parishioners. It may be questioned whether he was at liberty to concede so much to the Compagnie.

"2. He is suspended for a year from the right of sitting in the Compagnie, except in cases where he shall be specially sent for," &c.*

We have given this brief narrative of the proceedings in the case of Dr Gaussen, partly with the view of showing the un-evangelical character of the pastors at Geneva, and partly for the purpose of adverting to one of the most important events in modern times in the history of evangelical religion on the continent of Europe: we mean the establishment of the Evangelical Society of Geneva.

About the time of M. Gaussen's censure and suspension, M. Merle d'Aubigné, who had for some time been officiating as pastor in one of the Protestant churches in Brussels, returned to Geneva. Offended with the heretical opinions of the pastors, and encouraged by the progress of truth and vital piety in the canton, he resolved, in concert with M. Gaussen and M. Galland, also a pastor at Geneva, to establish a society having for its object the dissemination of gospel truth. In a short time the society was formed, including, as a part of its plan, the institution of a school of theology; and its formation was announced by public circulars. The Compagnie complained to the consistory, demanding of that court that M. Gaussen should be deprived of his office as pastor of Satigny, and that he and MM. Galland

* The case of M. Gaussen affords a fine illustration of the immense advantages of a religious establishment when it is on the side of truth. If its laws be duly administered, it forms a shield to faithful men amidst many faithless, and in the event of the revival of pure religion, strengthens the hands of the preachers of the word, and encourages the profession of the truth as it is in Jesus. The writer does not, in this remark, attempt to justify the errors and defects of the Genevese and other Swiss Protestant establishments.

and Merle, ministers, should be interdicted from preaching in the churches and chapels of the canton. The consistory in a summary manner complied with the request of the Compagnie, and the government soon after sanctioned and confirmed their sentence.

Happily for Geneva, and for the Christian world, there is a greater measure of political freedom there than in the other cantons. The government, though it confirmed the sentence of the consistory, did not interfere to prevent the establishment or continuance of the Evangelical Society. It pursued its bold and Christian course with indomitable firmness and energy, and stands forth at the present moment the honoured instrument of training men for the ministry in Switzerland, France, Germany, and Italy, and even in Canada, and of distributing in the former of these countries Bibles and tracts, on which the Divine blessing has rested in a very remarkable degree. The report of the Society for last year bears, that the actual number of students in the theological school was thirty-six, viz. twenty in the school of theology, and sixteen in the preparatory school. Of the actual students, eleven were Swiss, eleven French, six Waldenses, three Belgians, two Germans, two Italians, and one Scotch. Under the head of Bible distribution and colportage, it states, that its colporteurs had, during the year, sold about 11,000 copies of the Scriptures, and above 100,000 tracts. Under that of foreign evangelization, the Society reports, that its evangelists or missionaries, amidst almost continual opposition from the Romish priests, and false Protestants, and Plymouth brethren, are not without cheering indications of the Divine presence and blessing. And notwithstanding the intolerance both of the Protestant and Catholic cantons, the success of

the Society in the diffusion of gospel truth in Switzerland has far exceeded its expectations.* In addition to these bold and liberal efforts for the dissemination of Divine truth, the Society has opened a place of worship in Geneva, (the Oratoire), where the gospel is preached, and the sacraments are dispensed. The expenditure of the Society on all these different objects, for the year ending 31st March 1844, considerably exceeded 100,000 francs. May we not, on contemplating these splendid efforts of Christian liberality and zeal, cherish the fond expectation, that Geneva is destined to become, in the present age, as in the age of the Reformation, one of the fountains whence the pure stream of Christian knowledge shall issue for the refreshment of the nations now perishing for lack of knowledge?

The altered political condition of the canton of Geneva operates to a certain extent as a discouragement to these expectations.

At the restoration of the republic in 1815, the political leaders of the canton craved of the Congress of Vienna the cession of certain French and Savoyard villages on the right and left banks of the Rhone, with a view to the concentration of the territories of the canton. The request was granted. By the treaty of Turin in 1816 with the court of Sardinia, a new territory was formed, including a considerable proportion of a Romanist population. Before that period, all the Genevese were Protestants, and returned only Protestant representatives to the Legislative Assembly: now the number of Protestant and Popish representatives is

* The governments of the Valais, Lucerne, and other cantons, have passed laws so severe against proselytism from Popery, that it is said that it were more easy to preach the gospel in Italy than in these places.

nearly equal; and, considering the intolerance of the Popish cantons to which we have alluded, the friends of Protestantism have just ground to fear for their religious liberty, if the Catholics should obtain the majority. These apprehensions have led to the recent publication by Dr Merle d'Aubigné, of his animated pamphlets on what he terms "The Church Question of Geneva." Let it be the fervent prayer of British and other Christians that these fears may not be realized; and remembering that prayer without the use of means cannot be acceptable, or procure the blessing, let them aid, according to their abilities, the Evangelical Society of Geneva, now so earnestly and successfully occupied in promoting the cause of gospel truth, not in Switzerland only, but throughout the earth. It is in truth the great bulwark of Protestantism in that country, and, so far as we can judge, the destined instrument, in the hands of God, of preserving, for a time at least, its religious liberty.

At the time of the negociations, which terminated in the treaty of Turin, a member of the Compagnie, now one of the Professors of the Evangelical Theological Seminary, entreated the pastors to go *en masse* to the council, to represent to the citizens that the treaty would unprotestantise them, and that it was a treaty which their fathers would have resisted to the death. But after deliberating upon the subject at several sittings, one of the most influential of the pastors and professors quashed the proposal by this prediction: "Gentlemen, the Catholics will melt before us as snow before the fire." "In place of that," says my informant, "they have increased in number from year to year, like a ball of snow in our mountains." The increase, however, has been chiefly on the frontiers of the canton,

and has been caused not by proselytism, but by immigration.

In connection with these facts, it is most gratifying to be able to state on the highest authority, that in the town of Geneva, the Evangelical Society has been reaping the most abundant fruits. Never was there more of a spirit of Christian union among the friends of truth,—the spirit of prayer also has been copiously poured out, and their zeal and activity increases from day to day. The Compagnie are as hostile as ever, but the number of its young ministers, of pious character and deportment, unprovided with parishes or congregations, is on the increase, notwithstanding the obstinate determination of the Compagnie to exclude from all appointments men of evangelical opinions and character. The people are opening their eyes and directing their attention to the word of God.

Among other evidences of the progress of evangelical religion, is the rise of an association, entitled the "Protestant Union." The *Propaganda*, the seat of which is at Lyons, which the pope has sanctioned by a bull, and which collects annually 3 millions francs, has itself published that it remits every year the sum of 45,000 *francs* to the bishop of Fribourg, with a view to the increase of Popery in Switzerland. With that money the Papists are building fine churches, in places where they have almost no flocks. In opposition to these efforts, the Genevese founded the Protestant Union, which has already been productive of good fruits, both in awakening professing Protestants to a sense of the danger to which the cause of Protestantism is exposed, and in turning the attention of Protestants and Catholics alike to the word of God.

THE OTHER CANTONS SINCE THE REFORMATION.

No history has yet been published of the state of religion in these cantons, during the 17th and 18th centuries. That of Ruchat, so far as yet published, brings down the narrative no farther than 1566.* Our notices, therefore, on this part of the subject assigned to us, must necessarily be very brief.

It is believed that the Catholic cantons have remained to the present day very nearly in the same condition as at the time of the Reformation. Except in a few instances, where men of evangelical piety and zeal have succeeded in shaking the attachment of their Catholic brethren to Popery, and in converting them, no impression has been made, no change effected on their spiritual condition. They and their fathers have loved the darkness rather than the light; and in that darkness a righteous God has condemned them to remain. They vindicated their civil liberty against the tyrants of France and Austria; but they wanted, and still want, the inclination or the courage to assert their spiritual liberty against the tyranny of a cruel, a cunning, and an ambitious priesthood. They cannot pass from their own into a neighbouring Protestant canton, without seeing, in its greater civilisation and prosperity, the happy results of deliverance from the Romish yoke: yet they remain the willing subjects of a blind and degrading superstition, committing their understanding and their conscience to the keeping of men certainly as fallible as themselves, and all whose power and influence rest on the ignorance of those whom they keep in bondage. Popery in these

* The jealousy of the late government of Berne prevented the publication of the last two volumes.

unhappy countries is the same now as it was 250 years ago. The land is as parched and barren as at any former period, waiting, to all appearance, till the hour when the Man of Sin shall be utterly overthrown, and the times of refreshing shall come which shall usher in the glories of the millennium.

In the Protestant cantons, exclusive of Geneva, the spiritual awakening produced by the preaching of the doctrines of the Reformation does not appear to have continued nearly so long as in that city; and this fact is accounted for by a circumstance already adverted to, namely, that there were fewer refugees in these cantons to fan the embers of a faith ready to die. In German Switzerland, after the times of Gualtherus, the Bullingers, Haller, and others, there have been very few men distinguished at once for learning and vital piety. Both in German and French Switzerland, lukewarmness and indifference succeeded to the enlightened fervour of the Reformation, and the Arianism and Neologism of the eighteenth century found a congenial soil in the hearts of many of the professors, pastors, schoolmasters, and people of Protestant Switzerland.

We have not perhaps a clearer indication of the decline of evangelical religion and vital piety in those times, than in the public renunciation of the creeds and formularies which were accepted by the Swiss people in the earlier and better times of the Reformation. The form of republican government affords a greater facility to the expression of the popular voice than any other. The decrees of their Little and Great Councils, as they were called, bring out the expression of the general, though, in most instances, the rashly-formed and unenlightened opinion of the masses of the community. We have noticed the illegal abolition of the ancient formu-

laries by the pastors of Geneva, the government and people acquiescing in silence. We have now to mention the more formal rejection of the Protestant confessions by the councils of other cantons.

A short time after the middle of the 16th century, when the Reformation had gained a solid footing in the greater part of Switzerland, Bullinger, Peter Martyr, and others, expressed a strong desire to have the several churches united in a common and public confession of the Helvetic faith. Before that time each canton had its own formulary. Zurich and Berne had already thought of uniting in the publication of a common confession. The disputes between the Swiss and Lutheran churches, on the subject of the sacrament, for a time interposed obstacles in the way of the accomplishment of this desirable object. At length, however, a confession drawn up by Bullinger having been fully approved and accepted by the Elector Palatin Frederick, it was communicated to the towns of Berne and Geneva —by whom, and by Schaffhausen it was approved and agreed to. Beza made a journey to Zurich, expressly to testify to the theologians of that city, the consent of the Genevese. Thereafter it was accepted by the Grisons, St Gall, Neufchâtel, and several free towns in alliance with the Swiss. Finally, it was published in German and Latin in the year 1566, with a defence or apology by Semler, and attested by the seals of the three cantons of Zurich, Berne, and Schaffhausen, and the other places above-mentioned. When it was published, the reformed churches of Scotland, Hungary, and Poland, approved of it, and subscribed it. The reformed churches of France and England also approved of it, but did not adopt it as their proper for-

mulary. Basil, Glaris, and Appenzel embraced and subscribed it.

It is evident from these facts that no formulary of the reformed church has obtained a more universal approbation than the Helvetic Confession, and that the public abjuration of so excellent a summary of Christian doctrine affords the strongest evidence of the departure of the people from true Protestantism. Yet it is a fact that the canton of Zurich, by the influence of an infidel clergy, and that of Vaud in opposition to the unanimous advice of its clergy, have, by the will of the Great Council, within these few years, publicly renounced the Helvetic Confession. We are grieved to state that the clergy of Vaud have, notwithstanding, continued in the bosom of an Established Church, which has thus openly and by a public act departed from the profession of the Protestant faith. It is not wonderful that, in these circumstances, their instructions, though in many cases, sound and Scriptural, do not appear to make any salutary impression upon their hearers, whose hatred to the sect of the Momiers (Methodists), has been manifested of late years in imprisoning and banishing, under a law passed for that purpose, some of the ablest and holiest men of the Vaudese Church.

Basil retains its ancient confession, and its catechism, which is excellent. The church there is one of the most flourishing in Switzerland, in proportion to its numbers. Out of twenty-four pastors and ministers of the canton, twenty preach the gospel faithfully to numerous audiences, composed of people of all ranks. Its missionary institution, founded in 1816, has now sent out 174 of its pupils, under its own or other societies. The Basil Missionary Society had missionaries first in Astracan,

then in the Russian part of Armenia, and at Tebriz in Persia. These being broken up by the Russian government, their second mission was in Liberia, which was terminated by the death of nearly all the missionaries, and was given up on the arrival of labourers from North America. Last of all, they sent a mission to the Danish gold coast, which now, after the early decease of five missionaries, is going on prosperously. It consists of six missionaries, one a negro educated in Basil.

In the other cantons of which we have spoken, there are not wanting signs of spiritual life, which are not a little encouraged by an annual conference of the Swiss evangelical ministers, at which reports are given in, and propositions discussed in private by the brethren. A spirit of inquiry is awakened, and the pastors are mutually strengthened and animated. Some, among whom may be mentioned particularly the well-known M. Viret at Lausanne, preach the truth with great boldness, and, it is hoped, not without fruit, to the glory of our Lord and Saviour. In Berne there are awakenings in many of the villages, and on the mountains of the Oberland. In Zurich, where the Reformation had, under Zwingli, so favourable a commencement, it is computed that of 200 ministers, not more than ten preach the gospel in its purity.

CONCLUSION.

I have thus travelled over the field allotted to me, very cursorily and imperfectly, considering the magnitude of the subject, but in such a manner, I trust, as to afford a correct and intelligible view of the state of evangelical religion in Switzerland in past and present times—which, let it be observed, has been the sole object

of this discourse. I shall not prolong the lecture by expatiating on the various important lessons which are presented to us in the spiritual history of this singular and interesting country; but shall conclude with remarking, that in no country, and at no period in the history of the church, shall we find a more striking manifestation of the sovereignty of God in the dispensation of spiritual blessings, and a more visible display, if we may so speak, of the operation of the Holy Spirit in producing once and again those religious revivals to which our attention has been directed in the preceding pages. In contemplating these things we ought to feel, and humbly to acknowledge, our dependence and that of our fellow-men on the God of all grace for repentance and salvation, and, in fervent prayer for the free Spirit of God, to commit ourselves and them to his keeping, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

LECTURE VII.

THE PAST AND PRESENT STATE OF EVANGELICAL RELIGION IN FRANCE.

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General Interest belonging to the History of France—Roman Conquest and Religion—Early Christianity—Irenæus at Lyons—Vigilantius—The Paulicians—Gotteshalcus—Claud of Turin—Piedmontese—Patarines—Peter Waldo—Crusades against the Albigenses—Proofs that the Truth was not exterminated—General character of the Albigenses—Peculiarities of the French Reformation in the 16th century—Religious Wars—St Bartholomew Massacre—Comparative prosperity under the Edict of Nantes—Its Revocation—Religious decline and suffering—Revolution 1793—Revival since the Peace 1815—Labours of R. Haldane, Esq.—Dissemination of the Scriptures—Evangelical Societies—Spiritual fruit at the present day—Practical lessons—Christ's faithfulness—His moral government—Duties of Christians towards France—Peculiarities of her position and prospects—Popery rising throughout the world—France its head quarters.

SUCH is the subject which has been assigned me in the present course of lectures. All will at once see that it is most important and comprehensive; so much so, that I can hope to touch only the leading outlines.

To an intelligent British Christian, few themes of contemplation are more interesting than the history of France. In its earlier days, prior to the introduction

of Christianity, it is the Gaul of which we read, at school in the Commentaries of Cæsar,—as the scene of the most distinguished of Roman conquests. After the blessed light of the gospel has arisen, it becomes the seat of many Christian churches—the land of glorious martyrdoms. As time rolls on, its churches become grossly corrupt—still there is a long and lingering testimony against the usurpations of the Bishop of Rome. The earliest traces of witnesses for the truth, are to be found not only on the borders of France, the Alps of Piedmont, but on the southern soil of France itself. The first and most fearful crusade against the faithful—armed with all the terrors of the Inquisition—was on French ground, and against French witnesses of the faith. Other scenes more directly British in their bearing next come into view. There are many and protracted contests between France and the island of our birth: many brilliant battles of British prowess won on French ground. France invades Britain, and gives to her a line of kings, and with them changes in laws and manners, and in some respects language, remains of which survive to the present day,—while Britain holds extensive possessions in France, which are slowly and reluctantly yielded. Then come the days of the great Reformation from Popery. Nowhere was the change more rapid or promising; nowhere the struggle more fierce and bloody. Massacres took place in France, which, in extent of treachery and woe, are not surpassed by any of the most terrible doings of the antichristian apostacy. Protected peace follows, only to wear down by harassing interference with the government and discipline of the church, what could not be accomplished by wholesale massacre. Error and decline invade the

church's borders; a fresh violent persecution followed, which drove nearly a million of subjects to foreign shores, to proclaim the treachery and bloodthirstiness of Rome. Then succeeds, as might have been expected, the age of weakness and exhaustion; true religion almost expired; amid its ruins rank infidelity is nursed, and at length comes forth to wrap not only France but all Europe in revolutionary flame. By an unparalleled sacrifice of life and treasure the conflagration was at length extinguished,—only, however, after scattering the elements of disorder. Ever since the soil of the Continent has been volcanic. A political change in France is felt at the limits of Europe. Weary with the reign of infidelity, while a stranger to the love of the truth, her people have been longing for religious rest. Popery is rising into ascendancy anew, and turning all the influence of France, in science, arts, arms, and civilization, into the channel of Rome. Events are evidently preparing for some vast crisis. The far-seeing Sovereign of the French proclaims, that the next war in Europe will be a religious war. Such are the circumstances in which we are called to give some account of the past and present state of evangelical religion in France. Surely, it must be confessed, that, next to our own land, there is no one which, whether from vicinity or character, or past associations, should prove more interesting to a British Christian. May it not justly be said, that the events of its history are as stirring, yea more so, than those of our own; and that her prospects in the future are not likely to fall short in interest of those which have become already the history of the past?

Let us now return and take a rapid glance at the religion of Gaul, always one of the most compact and

well-defined countries of Europe, and also one of the most extensively known. The wisdom and mercy of God anticipated the coming of Christ, and prepared the world, long sunk in benighted darkness, to profit by His advent when it arrived. Fifty years before the birth of the Saviour, the Romans, as the great pioneers of Christianity, by the opening up of countries hitherto inaccessible, the establishment of roads and posts,—overrun the multitudinous petty and divided tribes of Gaul, and brought them under one uniform rule. The achievement was not accomplished without protracted policy. Such were the military character and other qualities of the people, that it cost the most illustrious general of Rome, Julius Cæsar, ten years of his active life, and involved his engagement, according to Plutarch, with not less than thirteen millions of men. Little as he dreamed of the intention of Providence,—following, though he did, only his own glory and the aggrandisement of the Republic,—there was a real and merciful design in the event. God meant to prepare the way for the introduction and spread of the religion of his Son.

The Romans improved the country by planting colonies and cities, particularly along the banks of leading rivers. The cities of Lyons, Vienne, Arles, Toulouse, and many others, are all of Roman origin. At first, the kingdom must have borne a strong resemblance to Canada in our day, almost covered with impenetrable forests; but ere long the savagism of nature gave place in some degree to the arts of peace, and the very climate became so changed to the better, as to admit of the introduction of the vine and the olive. There were more important changes, however, than these. Though the Romans, with all their power and knowledge, were but poor

idolaters themselves,—indeed, eminent for their superstition, and cruel in their treatment of the vanquished,—they had enough of humanity to be shocked with the human sacrifices which the natives profusely offered at the call of their Druidical priesthood. So little influence has the mere doctrine of the unity of Deity upon men's moral and religious feelings when disjoined from other truths, that the Celts of Gaul, at the very moment they maintained the faith of one supreme Divinity, delighted in the sacrifice of their most beautiful children,—sacrifices which the Romans, sunk in the worship of ten thousand idols, rejected with horror, and successfully used their power to extinguish. Whatever religious improvement was introduced in this way, it cannot be doubted that the chief service which Rome rendered to ancient France, was by opening up the country to the safe and easy travelling of the apostles of the Cross. Hence the interesting fact, that the earliest traces of Gallic Christianity are identified with its Roman towns and colonies.*

* In passing, it may be noticed, that the Divine providence which prepared for *the propagation* of Christianity by the formation of the Roman empire in its extent, provided for *the preservation* of the same at a later day, by dividing the Roman empire into ten separate kingdoms. Thus the antichristian apostacy was deprived of the power of exterminating the truth: when persecuted in one country the faithful fled to another. But for this wise and merciful arrangement, humanly speaking, evangelical religion, on repeated occasions, would have been extinguished.

EARLY CHRISTIANITY—FIRST PERIOD, FROM APOSTOLIC TIMES TO A. D. 208.

The facilities of travelling between Greece and Italy and Gaul, seem to have afforded an early opportunity for the spread of the gospel into the latter. We do not read in the 2d chapter of the Acts, of devout Jews from France being among those who assembled at Jerusalem, and shared in the effusion of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost; but we read of representatives from as remote quarters, and, among the Epistles of the New Testament, we soon meet with a letter to the churches of Galatia. There can be little question that the inhabitants of this Roman province were originally from Gaul. Besides direct testimony, their character harmonizes with that of the French in every age. It would be natural to suppose, that colonists living in the east, would not be long of communicating to kinsmen in the west, tidings of a revelation so glorious as that of the free salvation of the Gospel. Accordingly, we early read in ecclesiastical history of the introduction of Christianity into Gaul. Irenæus, who appears to have been born and educated at no great distance from Galatia, was the pupil of Polycarp, who again was the disciple of the apostle John. In all probability, not above sixty years stretched between the death of the last of the venerable college of apostles and the active days of Irenæus. This learned, and withal laborious and missionary-spirited man,* went with Poly-

* It is stated that he acquired the Celtic language, to enable him the better to minister the gospel among the mountaineers of his charge.

carp to Rome, and, when there, seems to have been encouraged to travel westwards, and take charge of the Christian church at Lyons, There were more reasons than one for the step: not only were numerous countrymen settled in the south of France, but errors were appearing in the Christian churches of these regions. This implies that, early as the age was, Christianity had been established for some time. The church, too, of Lyons, to which Irenæus repaired, does not seem to have been an infant institution, but fully organized with office-bearers. We may not be able to trace the history of this and of many similar churches of Christ in distinct records. Usually God's people are "hidden ones;" and He withholds from posterity the knowledge of the early history of churches, that they may not be tempted to the idolatrous admiration of the earthly founders,—an unhappy propensity, strong in our fallen nature.* Not unfrequently the indications of the Christian church can be traced only in the fires of martyrdom; so it was with the early churches of France. The churches of Lyons and Vienne on the banks of the Rhone, as early as 169 A. D., heard the distant roll of the thunder, which soon burst in storms over their heads. This first recorded persecution in France, as if to give its character for all subsequent time in the same country, was peculiarly severe. All ages and conditions were called to suffer: Pothinus, the venerable pastor of ninety,—Sanctus, the

* It is doubtless owing to this, that God in his providence has hitherto allowed the history of Piedmont, and the dominions of the family of Savoy, to be less known and explored than that of almost any region of Europe. Historical writers have strongly complained of the denial of the means of information. It is only now that the veil begins to be removed, and that but partially.

deacon,—Maurus, the newly baptized,—Blandina, the delicate female slave,—Ponticus, the lad of fifteen years of age, were all, with many more, subjected to inconceivable tortures, in which the furious wild beast and the red-hot iron chair bore their terrible part. Nobly did they endure,—there was not the flinching of a moment. Irenæus, undismayed by the spectacle, two years after accepted the post of danger as successor to the pastor. He contended for the truth by his writings as well as by his ministerial labours. The churches with which he is associated were evidently felt to be influential witnesses against heresy and disorder; but this was no protection,—their very fidelity provoked Satan and his agents more than the worst heresy would have done. Severus, the Roman emperor, worthy of the name, started a persecution, one of the memorable ten; and Irenæus, after more than thirty years' services in France, was decapitated with a multitude of his people.

EVANGELICAL HISTORY FROM A.D. 208 TO A.D. 817.
SECOND PERIOD.

And now a new era opens upon us, which stretches between the death of Irenæus and the appointment of Claudius to the bishopric of Turin. The period is one of 600 years; and we make choice of this division of time, because Claudius was connected with France, and sometimes is denominated, we believe justly, the first Protestant reformer. I am anxious, if possible, to trace the TRUE APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION of Divine truth and Gospel ordinances from the beginning. The promise of the ascending Redeemer to his disciples,

that he would "be with them always even to the end of the world," seems to intimate that the truth would not only be indestructible, but that there would be a succession of faithful men to maintain it in a church capacity. It is in connection with their discipling all nations, and baptizing them in the name of the adorable Trinity, and receiving the warrant to exercise ecclesiastical authority, that the promise of perpetual presence and blessing is vouchsafed. If such be the correct interpretation, we may be sure,—though the evidence of the fulfilment of the promise may not have been recorded,—that it was really made good. But there are some traces of the succession of which we speak.* No doubt the period before us is the very period when, in the just retributions of the great Moral Governor of the world, the Roman empire, which at an earlier day had been the oppressor of others—the oppressor of Gaul,—came in her turn to be overrun and oppressed by barbarian hordes. No doubt this is the age when, favoured by these commotions, and the ignorance and credulity which they drew along with them, the Bishop of Rome mounted the throne of the Cæsars, and became universal Pope. Still, disturbed as society must have been, and fallen and corrupted as was

* The absurdities which have been written and spoken in connection with the "apostolic succession" of churches which have no just pretension to the name, may, in many Christian minds, have created a disgust at the whole subject. But it is believed that here, as in every thing else, Popery counterfeits a truth. There *is a real apostolic succession*, though not that of Rome. There is the indestructible succession of gospel doctrine and ordinances; and, it is apprehended, that the best way of meeting the error is not by denying the entire doctrine, but by teaching the true doctrine. Hence the importance of such historical notices as those which follow.

Christian antiquity, are strongly of this opinion.* Among the mountains of Dauphiny, in the south of France, there seem to have been many witnesses who held and transmitted the truth in its purity, through the most early and obscure historical times. Nor was the light confined to them. In the west of France, at the foot of the Pyrenees, not more than 150 years after the martyrdom of Irenæus, we meet with a name which deserves to be recorded among the way-marks of truth. I allude to VIGILANTIUS, the friend of Sulpicius Severus, the historian. Boldly did he protest against the rising errors of Rome, and that at a time when not a few of them found favour with such men as Augustine and Jerome. Earnestly did he spread gospel light over his native territory, and afterwards through important parts of France.

* The reader may be glad to see the following sentences from Mr Taylor's *Introduction*. No authority can be higher in matters of church history. "A pure—a truly apostolic church driven into inaccessible regions towards the close of the 4th century, maintained its integrity from age to age, in poverty and amid fierce persecutors, until at length the brighter light of the Lutheran Reformation having been kindled, the office of witnessing for the truth was transferred to men who were gratified to discharge it in a manner better adapted to the altered condition of the European nations."

It was not till after the text was written that I met with Mr Taylor's Essay, the reader then will understand the pleasure which I feel in having my views as to the early appearance of evangelical religion in France, confirmed by such an authority. After stating that it is *now* satisfactorily ascertained that a system of doctrine essentially reformed had a home in the Western Alps, he adds, "On both sides of the Pyrenees, moreover, and especially on the northern (the French) side and throughout Aquitane (one of the extensive divisions of ancient France), there appear to have subsisted churches substantially apostolic in faith and discipline, and these *communities*, protected by persons in power, were able to hold at bay the dogs of papal fanaticism during several centuries;" p. 16.

Nor did he limit his efforts to oral communication. He expended no small part of his time and his fortune in the transcription and circulation of the word of God, which with him was not only *a* rule, but to use the language of our Shorter Catechism, "*The only rule*" of faith and manners. This was the distinguishing peculiarity of Protestantism. God blessed his labours, and whether in the way of preserving from error or reclaiming from it, so it was, that the pastors of Southern Gaul were sound in the faith, when rising superstition and heresy were spreading rapidly throughout Christendom.

Apart from what may be styled the native transmission and propagation of evangelical religion in France, events occurred in the east little more then 200 years after the age of Vigilantius, which brought a favourable influence from without to bear in the same direction, I allude to the rise of the PAULICIANS about A. D. 650. These men acquired their names from their noted attachment to the writings of the Apostle Paul, in other words to that true evangelic faith of which Paul was the most distinguished apostle. As might have been expected from the temper of the times, (for but a few years before, Phocas the Roman Emperor, a tyrant, usurper, and murderer, had conferred the title of Universal Bishop and head of Christian Churches on the Pope of Rome), they were soon and severely persecuted. Indeed, in these early days, it is often more by the reproaches of enemies, tales of calumny, and the blood-tracks of martyrdom, than by any recorded statements of the parties themselves, that we trace the succession of divine truth. The Greek Emperors proved fierce enemies,—thus proclaiming that the hatred to the gospel of grace is not confined to place; that

in the east or the west, wherever there is depraved human nature, there the hostility is the same. The Empress Theodora, it is related, was the occasion of the violent death of not less than 100,000 persons in Asia Minor alone. While this shews how numerous were the Paulicians—how widely diffused the gospel by their instrumentality, it is not wonderful that multitudes, driven from their homes, moved westwards, and as Galatia, one of the provinces of Asia Minor, was originally a Gallic settlement, it is natural to suppose, that not a few would find their way to France, from whence their friends and forefathers had originally migrated. There can be little question, that though the religious gloom of the west was deepening every year, the refugee Paulicians would exert a favourable influence on the Christianity of the countries where they sojourned.

A hundred and sixty years after their migration westwards, the providence of God, as subservient to the kingdom of his Son, awoke a fresh and propitious influence for France in the person of CLAUDIUS, BISHOP OF TURIN. It would seem that God often carries on his work in the world, not so much by continuous action as by successive efforts and revivals. When one agent, after having secured its end, becomes weak and degenerate, a new one is raised up and called into play. When the Paulician light becomes dim and begins to disappear, a torch is put into the hands of Claudius. Long chaplain to Louis the Meek, king of France, and highly esteemed by him, he was appointed to his bishopric A. D. 817. Claudius was mighty in the scriptures, and powerful as a preacher of righteousness. His position gave him great influence, and earnestly did he wield it for Christianity. Indeed, his very appointment to the

bishopric of Turin by his royal patron, was intended to counteract the progress of image-worship and superstition strongly prevalent in the north of Italy. In no way did he labour more successfully for the cause of truth than by his writings, which were very numerous, consisting chiefly of expositions of the word of God. The French king and the most learned abbots of the period, earnestly encouraged him in such labours, and accordingly he seems to have written largely on the books of Moses, the Gospels, and the Epistles. Like his great successor Luther, he wrote on the Epistle to the Galatians, and brought out views of the grand doctrine of free justification, not inferior in clearness to those of the 16th century. The French court protected Claudius, and a synod held at Paris, by declaring against image-worship, practically maintained the same views.* But neither these things, nor the position which he occupied in the church, could secure him against persecution. The great and good Reformer was allowed to die in peace in A. D. 839, but his writings were objects of hatred—fuel for the

* One cannot but regret that so great and good a man as Claud felt it consistent with duty to remain in the communion of the church of Rome. Besides being wrong in itself, and injurious at the time to the cause of truth, such cases have afforded pretexts for good men in after times acting a similar part. Who can question, that the entanglements and consequent weakness into which they have brought themselves, have been owing to their false position as regards the church? Who can read the life of Boos in modern times, and not see that the comparative abortiveness of a revival of religion in Popish Germany, which promised fair, was owing to his obstinate attachment to a communion which he ought like Luther and Rongé to have abandoned—an attachment which made him instrumental in gaining over even spiritually converted Protestants to enter the Romish church!

popish fire.* What of them remains would on many points do honour to modern times. As Piedmont—the country of the Waldenses strictly so called—was within the diocese of Turin, of which he was bishop, we do not wonder to be informed that it was filled with his doctrine. Genebrard and Rorenco, two Roman Catholic historians, testify to its prevalence in that region in the 9th and 10th centuries.†

It would be wrong, in tracing the evidences of evangelical faith and practice at this dark period, not to notice the Monk of Soissons in the north of France—Gotteshalcus by name, (which in German means the servant of God).‡ He flourished immediately after the days of Claud, and advocated the doctrine of free grace by his pen as well as his tongue. A revival of such opinions was the fruit of his labours—but the punishment was severe. It terminated in an imprisonment of above twenty years' duration, which death brought to a close in A. D. 870. In another district of France at the same period, we have the record of similar evangelical views. Remigius, the Archbishop of Lyons, and Florus, one of the deacons, were not ashamed to be their advocates. It is interesting to add, that the whole church of Lyons, at its outset the church of eminent martyrs, seems to have inherited their spirit down to this date. At least, they accorded on this occasion in the views of their office-bearers.

* Allix's Remains, 57–62. † Remains, 79.

‡ See his Life by Archbishop Ussher.

EVANGELICAL HISTORY FROM A.D. 839 TO A.D. 1160. THIRD PERIOD.

And now we pass into our third period—extending from Claud of Turin to Peter Waldo of Lyons. Waldo is the next great historical milestone, if I may so speak, in the present lecture. The space between reckons above 300 years, and what years! It would not be wonderful that in this age, which comprehends what even Roman Catholic historians acknowledge to constitute the darkest, most degraded, and immoral age of Popery, we should not be able to find many traces of the truth.* Our inability would constitute no good argument against its existence. A believer living in the days of Elijah—or reading the record of universal idolatry, might conclude with the prophet that he was the only faithful survivor; but the inference would be as mistaken as uncharitable. There were still 7000 who had not bowed the knee to Baal: and so of the period between Claud and Waldo. The very darkness and violence of the age were most unpropitious to historical records, especially of the truth. Indeed, it was a practice of Papal Rome to destroy such

* "When a comparison is made between the writings of the ecclesiastical chroniclers of the eighth century, and of those in the preceding ages, an immense difference is found. Every vestige of Roman civilization disappeared, even to the language, and barbarism was at its very acme. For, on the one hand, barbarians entered into the clerical order, and became priests and bishops; and, on the other, bishops adopted the barbarian life, and, without quitting their bishoprics, constituted themselves chiefs of banditti, roaming over the country, pillaging and fighting, like the companions of Clovis. Gregory of Tours mentions several bishops who passed their lives after this fashion."—*Guizot, Lectures on History of Civilization.*

records, to efface if possible the memory of her shame. Still we have traces, and these warranting more general inferences.

We do not detain the reader with any notice of what might be called the missionary efforts of the church in France in the end of the 10th century. There is reason to think that there were such efforts, and that not a few Normans on the north side of the kingdom were now for the first time led to adopt the Christian name. Whether the change involved more it might be difficult to determine. We would rather call attention to influences from other countries which must have quickened and strengthened the native Christianity of France. There were more than one foreign party which in this dark idolatrous age took up their residence within the French border. Among the Apennines of Italy and the Alps which separate Italy from France, there can be little question there were native churches which had retained purity of doctrine, discipline, and government from apostolic times. It is more easy to conceive how such parties should keep up an orthodox faith and practice, than recover them if they had once been lost among the corruptions of Rome. In the 10th century those inhabiting the valleys of the Alps, and who, correctly speaking, constituted the Waldenses, were so many in point of numbers, as well as clear and decided in their testimony, that they became the subjects of persecution. The severity was so great as to drive them not only to the neighbouring country, but to distant parts of Germany and Italy, and even of England. We may be sure, then, that France would become the refuge of the great majority. There was only one mountain barrier between—peaked indeed with summits of from 4000 to 5000 feet

in elevation. It was to the French side of these mountains that the sufferers were in the habit, in later times, of betaking themselves. An immense cavern, capable of holding from 300 to 400 refugees, and of being defended by a handful of men, opened its capacious retreat and preserved many a valuable life.* Doubtless such facilities encouraged the persecuted Waldenses in the earliest days of violence to repair to France. Indeed, the inhabitants of Piedmont and of the south of France seem to have been so much blended together from early times as common witnesses for Christ, that they are frequently confounded. They both rise so high as to be lost in the mist of antiquity.

Nor were the Waldenses the only tributaries to the native evangelical religion of France. Early in the 11th century (A. D. 1025), we read of the disciples of Gundulphus, an Italian, spreading their doctrines at Liege and Cambray in the north east of France,—doctrines entirely opposed to those of the church of Rome, and substantially the same with those professed by the Waldenses.† Thirty years later we read of another party of Italian origin, denominated PATARINES in reproach; and on the testimony of writers in the 12th and 13th

* There seems to be a reference to such retreats, not only in the scripture language, "they wandered in deserts, and in *mountains*, and in dens, and *caves* of the earth," but also in the expression, where speaking of the persecuted church it is said, that a *place was prepared for her of God.* The Great Head of the Church has usually prepared an asylum for his people in mountainous regions, which generally also have caverns. Hence the Apennines—the Alps—the Pyrenees—the mountains of Khourdistan where the Nestorians reside, and of Abyssinia, have all been retreats of the faithful.

† Allix's Remains, 93-100.

centuries, we find that, from a very early period, they had settlements in Gallia Narbonnensis or the district of Nabonne, in the south of France, as well as in the diocese of Cologne, and those of Flanders on the north.* They held similar theological views with the Waldenses, so much so that the same party, down to the age of the Reformation, were sometimes denominated Patarines and sometimes Waldenses. It is no great stretch of charity to believe, that the Cathari, though they have been charged with many heresies by the church of Rome, (and some Protestant writers have too readily credited the allegation), were, after all, consistent Evangelical Protestants—substantially at one with the different divisions to which reference has been made. Enemies speak of them so early as A. D. 1140. Besides Italy and Flanders, their chief settlements were in the south of France and along the banks of the Rhine—the great natural boundary of the country. Whatever might be the state of native Christianity in France,—however low and degenerate,—it is scarcely possible to imagine that such impulses from without would not be stimulating. This brings us down to the age of Peter Waldo of Lyons, A.D. 1160. At this time we read of persecution against the Waldenses so fierce, that thirty of them crossed over to England. A voyage then was a very different thing from the same voyage now, and if men were constrained to flee so far—after all to perish of cold and neglect—we may be sure that many would remain nearer home; in other words, would sojourn in France, the neighbouring land.†

* Allix's Remains, 149.

† "Even before the scenes at Orleans in 1017," says Dr Gilly, described by Glaber, voices had been heard almost simultaneously from Germany, *France*, and Italy, protesting against ecclesiastical

The Romish church has a purpose to serve in denying the antiquity of the Waldenses as a Christian community opposed to Rome, and hence endeavours to persuade the world that Peter Waldo in the 12th century was their father and founder. From the statements, however, already made, it is plain that, whatever influence he may have had in adding to the number of those who held the same sentiments, both the Waldenses of Piedmont, and their brethren the Evangelical Christians of France, existed in strength long before the days of Waldo. It is remarkable how God, in the exercise of his sovereignty, chuses not only some countries, but even towns, to be the depositaries for ages of the blessings of evangelical truth, while other countries and towns are passed by, or allowed to remain the victims of fatal error. The city of Lyons in France is an illustration of the propitious, destined doubtless one day to prove the occasion of terrible doom, should the city, as it now threatens, become the permanent head quarters of the Popish apostacy. The flames of its ancient martyrs will then only serve to light to more hopeless darkness and woe.

Peter Waldo was an opulent merchant of Lyons—brought to the knowledge of the truth,—not by man—not by any of the Waldenses,—but by the private reading of the word of God, to which he was led by a striking dispensation of Providence which deprived him of a friend. Thus it was with not a few of the leading Reformers: and we may see the reason. The circumstances of their

corruptions; and we have the testimony of Bernard of Clairvaux, Peter of Clugny, and Evevinus of Cologne, who flourished between 1120 and 1130, to prove that in that age zealous and holy men were to be found who declaimed against the errors and vices of the clergy, and proposed schemes of reformation."—*Life of Waldo.*

conversion were so ordered, that the world should not have it in its power to say that they were mere pupils, —the copyists of others. Their testimony to the truth shall be independent, and therefore the more valuable. Waldo having received the truth himself, could not keep it in the secresy of his own breast; he felt constrained to communicate it, and the plans which he adopted were eminently wise. The same scriptures which had proved so refreshing to his own soul, he used means to render a well of living waters to the souls of others. He collected learned men around him, and had the word of God translated out of the Latin into the vernacular French—the Provencal dialect which had been the first cultivated in modern times. This was the earliest attempt of the kind, and the achievement, though it was but part of the Scriptures after all which was translated, conferred a loftier honour than victory on a thousand battle-fields. The opulence of Waldo, and his commercial relations as a merchant, now came in aid of the efforts of his Christianity. He circulated the Scriptures—preached himself, and procured the services of others to preach—and though his friends and followers were denominated "the poor men of Lyons," with God's blessing they made many rich. Nothing could be more circumspect than the movement of Waldo. Popish authorities seem to have been recognised, if not consulted, at every step. But none of these things could overcome the native enmity of man, and especially of ungodly ecclesiastical rulers, to the truth of God. Soon the success of Waldo and his assistants drew down upon them a Popish excommunication, which was repeatedly renewed. Driven from their homes, they travelled over distant parts of France,—Alsace, Picardy, along the borders of the

Rhine, as well as over Dauphiny and the neighbourhood of Lyons. Eminently did God bless their labours. The good old merchant, after twenty years of missionary life and labour, was allowed to close his eyes in peace; but hot persecution raged against his followers,—persecution in point of severity surpassing any thing that was known before. Eighteen were burnt at Mentz, thirty-five at Bingen, and eighty at Strasburg—all on the banks of the beautiful Rhine. But natural beauty has no power over persecuting hearts, as the lovely scenes of Piedmont can amply testify.

The case of Waldo reminds one of an important principle apparently in God's government of his church, and that is—to check the pride of ecclesiastical rulers, and keep down the spirit of creature idolatry. Waldo was not an ecclesiastic—he was a layman; and his preaching, though without office in the church, seems to have been one of the things which provoked the excommunication. Yet the Spirit of God appended the most indubitable of all seals to his ministry. He blessed his labours more than those of many ecclesiastics; and so it has been since, apparently for the same reason. Witness the fruits of Robert Haldane's writings and labours on the Continent as well as at home.

EVANGELICAL HISTORY FROM A.D. 1160 TO A.D. 1500.
FOURTH PERIOD.

The next historical period stretches from Waldo to the Reformation,—a space of above 300 years. Waldo's followers may not have formed themselves into a distinct church bearing his name; they may rather have mingled

themselves with the existing Christians; but there can be no question they were faithful to their principles, and imparted a powerful impulse to the cause of evangelical religion in France and in neighbouring kingdoms. The proof of this is to be found in the fact, that the first great revolt from the church of Rome, and which she punished with tremendous and merciless severity, took place in France immediately after the death of Waldo, and for thirty to forty years subsequently. No doubt there was persecution before. We have seen that various parties, uncomfortable and oppressed at home, came as refugees as well as missionaries to France; still this was the first period when the church of Rome came forth as a church, and in her strength, to extinguish heresy. And when she appeared in this character, it was not, as many may be apt to imagine, against the Waldenses strictly so called, —the inhabitants of the Cottian Alps,—but against the Protestant French of the south, and south-east and west, of the kingdom. Dr Gilly expressly states, that it was not till A. D. 1210, that any public and authorized act of oppression was committed in the Piedmontese valleys;* whereas, from twenty to thirty years before this, the hottest persecution raged in France,—persecution unsurpassed by any thing which has been perpetrated in that country, famous beyond all others for religious bloodshed. So far from the Waldenses being persecuted at this time, their valleys were tranquil and protected,—so much so, that the poor suffering Albigenses,† the evangelical Protestants of France, betook themselves to Piedmont for

* Art. Valdenses, p. 541.

† So denominated from Alby, a French town, not on the borders of Piedmont, but in the south-east of the kingdom.

a refuge.* The honour, then, of standing the first brunt of papal Rome, when fairly roused, was an honour conferred upon France. Rome indeed triumphed,—she crushed the revolt for a season, and put back the Reformation, but how terrible and criminal the means! Kings were not only called in to destroy unoffending subjects, but the Inquisition, that tremendous engine of treachery and blood, was now first invented and brought into play. Religious orders wrought it. Its foundations, laid in France, gradually extended over Europe. One striking proof of the severity of the trial, is to be found in the remote quarters to which the refugees were driven. We may gather the force of the volcanic eruption from the distance to which the blazing fragments are scattered—and so of the volcano of persecution. The Albigenses were not only expelled from Spain, whither many of them had fled for an asylum; they were hunted into Croatia, Dalmatia, at the back of the Hadriatic,—yea, to Bulgaria, on the borders of the Black Sea.

Nor was the Inquisition—an appropriate instrument

* Of course, it is not intended for a moment to disparage the sufferings of the Christians of Piedmont. My only wish is to give the reader a correct idea of the *chronology* of martyrdoms. The Dukes of Savoy, who ultimately became such persecutors, did not acquire their full power in Piedmont till A. D. 1250. They pleaded, generations afterwards, that they were bound by treaty to allow the Piedmontese the free exercise of their religion; and, therefore, they did not comply with the calls of their Popish friends to exterminate heresy. Five separate seasons of oppressions can be counted in the 15th century, but it was not till the 1560 that the tempest fully descended. In 1540, 1541, and 1545, there was severe suffering (as in France at the same time), and for more than a century after, the history of Piedmont was little else than a history of sanguinary cruelty, and unflinching fidelity and fortitude.—*Allix's Remains*, p. 268.

of Papal torture—the only new application in that day of blood and woe. The age was the age of the Crusades, when Europe was precipitated upon Asia, and tens of thousands of brave soldiers were sent to water Palestine with their blood, in a vain attempt to seize the Holy Sepulchre from the Turks. Rome caught the idea of having a series of crusades against the heretics at home as well as the infidels abroad, and hence for years together, the south of France was made the scene of four or five successive crusades, or rather massacres. All men were invited, by the most tempting rewards for this life and the life to come, to go forth and serve for forty days against the accursed Albigenses,—persons, in the eye of Rome, more hateful and worthy of death than infidel Turks. Hence multitudes on multitudes, amid unutterable scenes of treachery, licentiousness, and cruelty, were put to death for no other reason than because they were Bible Christians, and refused to acknowledge the usurpations of an apostate church. I shall not sicken the reader nor myself with details—it were easy to do so—and perhaps careless Protestants would be the better of a little such sickness; suffice it to say, that the people in many cases were driven into self-defensive wars; that even Roman Catholic nobles and magistrates called upon their persecuted people to defend themselves against robbers and murderers, who, in the name of religion, laid waste entire provinces. Certain it is, that no scalping Indians of America ever surpassed in atrocity the proceedings of Frenchmen in the centre of Europe, acting as the agents of the professed representative of the Son of God upon earth. At the destruction of the town of Beziers, not far from the foot of the Pyrenees, it is estimated (the numbers vary) from 23,000

to 60,000 were massacred,—sad foretaste of and preparation for the massacre of St Batholomew at a later day, but shewing the character of the people and the religion ever the same. 7000 dead bodies were piled up in a single church.* The only consolation to be drawn from

* It may be added, that, in one fire kindled on the borders of Spain, 140 heretics were burnt at the same time; of the number, only three poor women could be prevailed upon to recant. Such was the magnitude of the work of persecution, that wood failed for the building of prisons to confine those whom the sword had spared; and those who fell before its edge were not few in number. It is estimated that, in about twenty years, nearly one million of French professors of the faith were, in one form or another, put to death,—in other words, fifty thousand a-year! What pen but that of Inspiration could describe the scene:—"And I saw the woman *drunken* with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." It is at once painful and revolting to record such facts; but it is salutary, and the aspects of the present times almost demand it.

"While it must be said, that to read the history of the extermination of the Albigenses is a sacred duty, it is true also that the having read it is something like a lasting misfortune. So long as our common nature, fallen as it is, contains elements of ferocity ready at any moment to break forth into acts of carnage and cruelty, and so long as the ancient superstition is extant, which, its principle being unchanged, is always ready to do again what it has done so often,—so long as it is so, none ought to think themselves excused from the duty of becoming acquainted with those dark pages of history. There are at all times at hand St Bernards and St Dominics, eager to set on the dogs of intolerance; nor will such men ever be at a loss for a Simon de Montfort, or want for a furious rabble, well inclined to do the pleasure of hierarchical fanatics. Spite of our boasted civilization, a few years of national convulsion, stirring the appetite of blood in the lowest classes, and ending in if it were only a short supremacy of despotism, might be enough to bring back, even upon "merry England," the burning of heretics. Human nature has *at all times* a latent hankering for vehement excitements of this kind; and it waits only for a word of encouragement from a fanatical government to glut the horrid appetite. It

these terrible facts, is the indirect evidence which they supply of the wide-spread diffusion of evangelical principles, and the fidelity and courage of the Albigenses. Rome did not, we may believe, send forth an army on one occasion of 300,000 men against a handful of heretics. With all her desire to strike a crushing blow, the heresy must have made, and been making, decided progress. A Roman Catholic historian of the period relates, that it had infected a thousand cities, and, if not checked, would have overrun Europe. The district of Narbonne, in the south of France, we are informed, had become so thoroughly evangelical, that, for thirty years, no mass had been sung in several of its towns.

After the first grand furious and successful onset of the Beast, there was comparative quiet in France, onwards to the period of the Reformation in the beginning of the 16th century. The scene of conflict was changed from her soil to that of England under Wickliffe, and Bohemia under Huss and Jerome, in the intervening period. This was not wonderful,—nations as well as individuals get weary of the shedding of blood. Even Voltaire notices this in regard to the very period under review; and states, that for 200 years after the wars against the Albigenses, they were unmolested. It cannot be doubted too, that, while there is weariness on one side, there is exhaustion on the other; the most prominent friends of evangelical religion are cut off, and the remainder are

is this knowledge of "what is in man,"—it is this lesson, taught by all history, that should inspire a constant watchfulness in regard to the advances of any species of spiritual despotism, and more especially in regard to that one species which, while it has grown old in the trade of infernal cruelty, is still young in the murderous energy of its hatred of truth."—*Taylor*, p. 20.

scattered, or borne down into obscurity and silence. Hence the general character of the age of which I write, is the absence of prominent marks of evangelical life and progress. Rome's first blow seems to have been intended to strike terror throughout Christendom; and she succeeded in her aim. No subsequent period ever surpassed her earliest violence. True Christians appear to have been thoroughly overawed, and, where they existed, to have spoken only in a whisper. Of course I speak generally and comparatively. The age, in more respects than one, was dismal. It was the age of God's judgments, which ought to have led all men to repentance. It was the age of the pestilence, when Europe in a few years lost twenty-five millions of its inhabitants; but there was no repentance. It was the age of the Crusades—the age of man's madness—which lasted for the better part of 200 years, and which cost the kingdoms of Europe six millions of human lives, to terminate after all in utter discomfiture and confusion.* As might have been expected, from the blended enthusiasm and military spirit of the French, it was among them that these insane military expeditions originated. It was the age of magnificent cathedrals, and of the schoolmen of surpassing acuteness, and of papal power almost unlimited.

* Guizot, in his Lectures on the History of Civilization in Europe, remarks:—"The main characteristic of the Crusades is their universality. All Europe together took part in them..... The French formed the bulk of the first army of the Crusaders..... All the Christian nations were engaged in each. Nothing similar had ever been witnessed. ..... Kings, lords, priests, burghers, husbandmen, all took the same interest and the same share in the Crusades." He might have added, as a proof of the insane enthusiasm, that, on one occasion, 100,000 children set out on the expedition!

Could these have conduced to the true religious welfare of men, no age should have been more blessed; but as if on purpose to shew the vanity of the unsanctified power, wealth, and intellect of man, the age was enveloped in intensest darkness. The Scriptures were so scarce and costly, that a labouring man must have toiled for fifteen years, ere with all his earnings he could have purchased a single poor MS. Pilgrimages and the worship of relics were the substitute for religion; and, as might have been anticipated, the moral corruption, in forms too shocking to be even alluded to, was universal, and always worst among those who were under the strongest obligations to purity.*

But with all this, evangelical truth was not exterminated in France. It was cast down and sore spent, but it still survived. If, in the 14th century, there were 80,000 Waldenses in Bohemia, it is not to be supposed, however little is recorded, that they were extinct in France, which might be called their native country. In the middle of the 13th century (A.D. 1250), there was a fierce and protracted contest between the Pope and the Emperor of Germany, which acted as a diversion in behalf of the friends of Evangelical religion, lately so severely persecuted. Thus it has been often ordered in God's providence. He allows the hands of the enemy to be so filled with their own quarrels, as to afford a breathing time to his saints. In this interval, Limborch, the historian of the Inquisition, speaking of Italy, relates, that "heresy had greatly increased during the preceding war." There can be little question that

* Rich men were so infatuated, that, when they felt themselves a dying, they sent for the old habits of friars, that they might be buried in them, and pass in safety as friars at the judgment day!

the same causes operated in France to a similar result. And throughout the whole of the 14th century, there was a cause which operated still nearer home, and in the same direction,—in other words, adversely to the papacy; I allude to the removal of the seat of the Popedom from Rome to Avignon in France, in the heart of the Albigensian country (A. D. 1308). Not only was the loss of historical recollections injurious, but the transference of the Papal Court to France, like the visit of Luther and others to Rome, was the occasion of disclosing Papal vice to many who had dreamed only of sanctity. It brought Rome near to them, and made sad disclosures. Later in the century, the schism which broke out in the Papacy, and which presented the edifying spectacle of two or three popes and antipopes fiercely contending for the tiara at the same moment, and excommunicating one another, as if to put a fool's-cap on their counterfeit doctrine of "apostolic succession," tended greatly to the temporary relief and quiet of the friends of truth. When popes were fully occupied with factions, wars, and personal imprisonments in their own precincts, they had little time or taste for Albigensian persecutions. Accordingly, while the Papal schism shook the hierarchy, and aided the Reformation, it brought direct relief and encouragement to the faithful French residing in the midst of it. At the same time, the partial persecutions which took place in different quarters of France in the course of the century, prove that the old spirit remained. It also proves, that evangelism was not extinct; there were numerous cheerful and devoted victims. In A. D. 1334, not less than 114 Albigenses were searched out at Paris, and burnt apparently in one fire. What an awful sacrifice! We would be horrified at the

sight of one; here there were 114, and yet the whole number bore the trial with noble unshrinking fortitude! Forty years later, a vast multitude were consumed to ashes in the Place de Greve in Paris,—a place, at a later day, not only stained but soaked with human blood. About the same period at Grenoble, in the south-east of France, there were similar proceedings. One monk of the Inquisition could boast, that, in thirteen short years, he had been the means of putting 150 victims to death by burning. Seventy years later (A. D. 1460), and still farther south, on the borders of Piedmont, three peaceful valleys of Dauphiny, which had hitherto been filled with humble disciples of the cross, were laid waste by a brother monk. So fierce and infatuated were his proceedings, that even the King of France (Louis XI.), when appealed to by those who were not Albigensians, put a stop to the persecution, and condemned the persecutors.*

Though one could not appeal to such facts as these, illustrative of the continued existence of evangelical religion in France, after the fearful sufferings of the 12th and 13th centuries, still we could not doubt its reality or power, when we consider how warm and extensive was the intercourse which prevailed among the faithful of all lands in these dark and trying times,—and how they strengthened each other's hands, and encouraged each other's hearts, particularly after enduring a great fight of afflictions. Rough and irregular as were the roads, and uncultivated as comparatively was the country, though travelling was far more difficult and dangerous than it is now, yet it is almost incredible what warm and extensive intercourse was kept up among the people of God. Letters were ever passing,—personal visits

* Jones's History, vol. ii. p. 223.

were frequent,—the houses of leading friends were like inns for the reception of the faithful; and such was the confidence which was cherished in one another, that, in England, private societies for reading the Scriptures in the version of Wickliffe, were kept up for twenty years together, in the heart of watchful enemies, without ever being discovered. In the middle of the 15th century, from Cologne on the Rhine to Milan in Italy, throughout the whole of Germany, there were houses of friends, where the faithful could pass the night undisturbed, indicated by private marks on the gates.* It was not likely in such circumstances, and with such facilities of intercourse, that true piety would be allowed to die. There might be little said or done which came under the eye of the public,—personal safety as well as the interests of religion might require this privacy,—but the flame would not burn the less surely that it was concealed. Hence, when the days of the great Reformation in the 16th century arrived, it was found that the very districts and even towns where the Albigenses had suffered, were the very quarters where the good seed of the kingdom most rapidly and extensively sprung up. Remains of truth had survived, and were kindled into a flame by the torch of the Reformation. Associations too, with martyred sires, and, it may be, answers to their prayers breathed forth from the stake, operated in the same way. So it was that Languedoc and Dauphiny

* Vitringa, as quoted by Dr M'Crie in his Memoir of Lambert, notices the mutual fraternal love, without envy or emulation, which characterized the leading men of the Reformation. Though ministers and laymen, and of different countries, the concord was not only wonderful, it was divine. The only serious exception was Luther's attack on Zuingle.

quickly caught the flame; and, from an early period, Paris, and Metz, and Lyons, and Strasburg, shared in the blessed illumination. All this shews the importance of preserving alive, in our own and in other lands, the memory of a martyr-testimony. It is not improbable, when days of revival come, that it may be through it the Spirit of the Lord will restore and extend his own work.* The importance becomes more solemn, when it is remembered,—what we believe could be made out from the history of France as well as of other countries, —that when men in earlier days reject the word *of* God, their descendants in more favourable subsequent times often do not participate in the blessing; in short, *that* men, by their refusal of the gospel, may affect distant posterity.†

* This shews the advantage of labouring in a country *once* Christian, over labouring in lands hitherto heathen. The Roman Catholic missionaries are alive to ancient associations; and hence the care with which they are at present planting their missions at sacred spots in Palestine, and endeavouring to avail themselves of traditionary recollections regarding the Bishop of Hippo, *and* similar names. Protestants should turn the same influence to account. It is an interesting circumstance, that several of the evangelical revivals in France at the present day, have appeared in spots where the truth had once been known, and where the memorials of it told with effect, both upon the natives and upon friends at a distance asked to lend their aid. The Vosges, Chalons, Troyes, Toulouse, &c. are examples. Nay, many of the communes in Haute Vienne, which at the present moment are separating from Rome, were once reformed, and were compelled to conform only by the dragoons of Louis XIV. The preacher can appeal in these cases to principles and feelings of our nature, which the word of God seems to sanction. It is interesting thus to mark the perpetual vitality of truth.

† See Blair's History of the Waldenses.

EVANGELICAL HISTORY FROM A.D. 1500 TO A.D. 1598.
FIFTH PERIOD.

Before noticing the religious state of France in our next period from the Reformation in the beginning of the 16th century, to the passing of the Edict of Nantes in 1598 at its close, I may advert for a moment to the GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE FAITHFUL ALBIGENSES, of whom I have been speaking. The very fact of their suffering so long and so cheerfully for Christ is itself high virtue, and indicates the possession of many other fine qualities, moral and spiritual. But there is more direct evidence. Like their divine Master, and the faithful of both Old and New Testament times, they may have been, and we know they were, subjected to all possible titles of reproach and the most unfounded imputations both as to doctrine and life; but even the most violent enemies and the most prejudiced popish historians have been constrained to bear witness to their general excellence and vast superiority to others around. Perhaps the most prominent feature in their character—certainly the root of most of the excellence for which they were distinguished—was their reverence and love for the word of God,—their familiar acquaintance with it,—and the zeal with which they laboured for its diffusion. One popish writer, who had himself been a persecutor, speaking of the faithful in the diocese of Toulouse, Alby, Rhodes, Cahors, Agen, and Narbonne, towns which stretch over a large region of the south-west of France, says they were so well instructed in the scriptures, that he had met with peasants who could repeat the book of Job and the whole of the New

Testament with the greatest accuracy. Another enlarges the testimony. Speaking of the body as a whole, he says one could scarcely find a man or a woman who had not the whole New Testament by heart. This is the more remarkable when we remember how ignorant the Roman Catholics were of the scriptures, and that, A. D. 1229, the reading of the word was for the first time expressly prohibited. In the south-east of France, again, on the borders of Piedmont, popish students from the Sorbonne of Paris, after an examination of the people (appointed by the popish bishop), confessed that they understood more of the way of salvation, from the answers of the little heretic children in their catechism, than from all the theological disputations at which they had been present. One great reason for the extensive committing of the scriptures to memory, was not only that they might thus possess the word in their minds, though the outward volume were snatched from their hands, but also that they might with more safety communicate the contents when perambulating the country as small dealers in domestic articles.

The character corresponded with such teaching. It was so ordered in the wise providence of God, which so often makes enemies do the work of friends, that two of the French kings, Louis XII. and Francis I., should be led successively to order inquiries into the character of their evangelical subjects, the better to ascertain the truth or the falsehood of charges whispered to their disadvantage. On hearing the report of his commissioners, the first declared with an oath that they were better than himself or his people; and his confessor, on another occasion, proclaimed his own wish that he were as good a Christian as the worst in the heretical valley of

Fraissiniere. The result, again, of Francis I.'s inquiries as to the province of Provence was, that the accused and persecuted were a peaceful people, beloved by their neighbours, faithful to their promises, punctual in the payment of debts, liberal to strangers, charitable to the poor, and most industrious in restoring villages desolated by war, and spreading the ensigns of fertility over districts once barren and desert. Thuanus, a French Roman Catholic historian of great honesty, who lived shortly after the rise of the Reformation, speaking of what, in some measure at least, had passed under his own eye in one of the valleys of Dauphiny, already referred to, writes,—"Poor as they are, they are content, and live in a state of seclusion from the rest of mankind. One thing is very remarkable, that persons externally so savage and rude should have so much moral cultivation. They can all read and write. They know French sufficiently for the understanding of the Bible and the singing of psalms. You can scarcely find a boy among them who cannot give you an intelligent account of the faith which they profess. In this indeed they resemble their brethren of the other valleys. They pay tribute with a good conscience, and the obligation of this duty is peculiarly noted in their Confession of Faith."* Similar is the testimony of Voltaire as to the body generally.†

And now we come to notice a few leading points in the first hundred years of the French Reformation. Already there had been two great risings of Evangelical religion against the errors and corruptions of the Church of Rome,—the first on the part of the Albigenses in

* Thuani. Hist. sui Temporis, lib. vi. sect. 16; quoted by Jones, p. 77.

† Universal History, vol. ii. p. 338.

France, in the 12th and 13th centuries; the second on the part of the Lollards of Bohemia, in the 14th and 15th, so far as external aspects were concerned, Rome had stood the assault; yea, had severely punished the daring, as she would account it, of her assailants on both occasions. But now the day arrives when she shall meet with reprisals, and almost one-half of Christendom shall successfully disown her authority. I refer to the great Reformation from Popery in the 16th century. The swelling waters which had been turned back before could be repressed no longer.

While the same divine hand can be seen in the events of the Reformation in all the Protestant kingdoms of Europe, there is at the same time a beautiful variety in God's dispensations to each, just as we see in the operations of the same hand in nature and providence. The *peculiarities* of the French Reformation, so to speak, were particularly interesting. In its general character, so far corresponding to that of its people, it was earnest and energetic—rapid, decided, and diffusive—mingled with occasional acts of serious imprudence, and stained with some cases of prominent apostacy.* Though there

* These must have been very injurious. Suppose that Luther, or Calvin, or Knox, after being fully committed to the Reformation, had acted a dishonest part and apostatised, what a triumph would have been given to popery—what a blow to truth! Less prominent men must, according to their sphere, have proportionally inflicted a similar injury. In modern days, cases could be appealed to where unfaithfulness in a mission-station against popery has been enough not only to extinguish it, but to give new life and strength to the apostacy. In the days of the French Reformation, one of the worst cases was that of Brissonet, Bishop of Meaux, who, after being identified with the reformers, and rendered even spiritually useful to the king's sister, gave way in the day of

were, doubtless, multitudes of hidden ones, faithful men, scattered over the country, and we know that the Albigenses greatly prepared the way for the harvest of the Reformation, yet the movement, like most other important French movements, *originated in the capital*,—not in the cell of a monk in a German village, but in the professor's chair of the most celebrated university at that time of Europe, in the heart of Paris. The French Reformation was not a copy from the German. This would not have accorded with the character of the people, while it would have been injurious, if not fatal, to the cause. It was an unborrowed independent movement; and hence the greater value belongs to it as a testimony to divine truth. But as Paris is every thing to France, and has ever been so, so it proved in the starting of the Reformation.

It may be added farther, that it was the *first movement in Europe*. I rejoice to find that D'Aubigné, the celebrated author of the "History of the Reformation," with all his just attachment to Luther, fully concedes this point. Many imagine, as a matter of course, that the German took the lead, and that but for it, Europe must have remained in popish darkness. The truth is, (and without detracting from the glory of any of the noble instruments whom the great Head of the Church saw meet to employ in the work,—let honour be paid to whom it is due,)—it was in France, strictly speak-

trial. He afterwards became the bitterest of persecutors. By his agency many were condemned to the flames; among the rest Peter Clerc, the reformed pastor. One was imprisoned for life at the bishop's expense! and yet he had a considerable air of sanctity. Probably in this way a guilty conscience sought to escape from its own misery.

ing, that the Reformation began.* The devout and learned Lefevre, Professor of Theology in the University of Paris, acquired the knowledge of the gospel not from Germany—not from men, but from the word of God, illuminated by the Holy Spirit. He was teaching salvation by free grace to earnestly listening students, who afterwards bore a distinguished part in the Reformation, while the great German reformer was but groping his way to the truth,—at least before he had taken any important public step on the side of the Reformation. It will be acknowledged by those who have studied this period of French history, that though no Luther had arisen, or the German Reformation had been strangled in its cradle, there would still have been a great reformation in France,—a reformation which in all probability would have extended to Switzerland, England, and neighbouring kingdoms, till it had overspread Europe. Let us not forget the early and the noble ser-

* It is common to associate the light and the frivolous with the French character, and there may have been too much ground for the association under the popish or infidel reigns of France; but the character under the power of divine truth is capable of great elevation, stability, and attainments. The Evangelical Protestants of France have ever been a noble race of men—very superior to their Roman Catholic countrymen—eminent for energy, ingenuity, and industry. Separated from popery as in the United States of America, and mingling with other Protestants, the French Huguenots have been distinguished among the different races of persecuted Protestants who have been the chief parents of the American population. Three of the seven presidents, during the war of the revolution, were of Huguenot origin; and one competent to judge has said, "No man in America need ever blush to own himself one of their descendants, for the observation has more than once been made, that among their descendants the instances have been rare indeed of individuals who have ever been arraigned for crime before the courts of the country."—*Baird's America*, p. 168.

vices of Lefevre, at once the teacher and the friend of William Farel,—that Farel who was born within a few years of Luther, and whose native valleys of French Dauphiny were suffering severely for their testimony to Christ and his gospel, while Luther was but a child. And as Lefevre had the start of Luther in the public and successful proclamation of salvation by grace through faith, so he was not behind him in the next great instrument of the Reformation—the translation of the word of God into the vernacular language of his country. Luther published his German New Testament in September 1522; Lefevre the chief part of his French New Testament in the succeeding month,—the October of the same year.

Another interesting feature in the French Reformation was *the numbers in the higher classes of society who embraced it.* Among these, Margaret of Valois, the sister of the king—Francis I., who was herself afterwards Queen of Navarre, in the south of France, was the most prominent. It is doubtful whether any kingdom of the Reformation could point at so early a period to a professor of the truth in every way so estimable and elevated. She was the zealous protector of the Reformed, and used all her influence with her brother to bring him to the knowledge and love and obedience of the gospel: in the earlier years of his reign, with the promise of success which the latter miserably falsified. As his reign proceeded, he became, with all his love of learning, a fierce and implacable persecutor.

It would be an interesting theme of inquiry to ascertain—never forgetting the sovereignty of divine grace—what were the probable causes of so many of the French aristocracy and opulent families of the middle classes,

and even branches of the Royal house, becoming Protestant. One reason has been suggested by D. D. Scott, Esq. in his interesting and philosophical introduction to the "Memoirs of Gaspar de Colligny." It is to the effect that the Protestants were mainly composed of families of Gothic and Teutonic origin, constituting the nobles of the land; while the Romans and the ancient Gauls, whom they had conquered, naturally remained with the Roman or Latin church. Hence there were two distinct races covering the soil of France, and their mutual jealousies and prejudices created separations which religious distinctions at the Reformation embittered. The reason assigned seems fitted to explain the uncommon severity and continuance of the French civil and religious wars. And it entirely coincides with the more general fact which holds true of the countries of Europe, viz., that those which finally cast off the Pope were of Gothic descent, and spoke languages of Teutonic origin; while those which adhered to Rome, or shortly thereafter relapsed into her arms, were of Latin origin, and spoke some modification or other of the Latin tongue. The northern nations of Europe which became Protestant, were of a Gothic family; the southern, which continued Popish, of the Roman family.

But to return from this digression. Another marked feature in the character of the French Reformation, was *the rapdity with which the parties, Protestant and Popish, came into a direct conflict.* This may have been hastened by the causes to which I have just referred, and the fiery spirit of the French. So it was, that leading friends of the gospel were quickly driven from Paris to Meaux—from Meaux to Nantes—from Nantes to Lyons and Dauphiny—and, ere long, were compelled to become

refugees in Switzerland. Of course the gospel made great progress in spite of the opposition, and in the very quarters where it most prevailed. Still there was early, almost immediate collision beyond what we meet with in other countries.*

And the severity was most merciless. In the earlier years of the 16th century, when the more prominent promoters of evangelical religion could not be found, a poor wool-carder—an obscure hermit whose very name has not been transmitted—a wretched youth of sixteen years of age, whom previous apostacy had sunk into misery, were not thought unsuitable victims for the great Gallican Popish Church! We can scarcely conceive any thing more mean or cruel. As the century advances and the gospel spreads, the character of French Popery does not improve in mildness. In 1535, Francis I. the patron of literature, makes a procession through Paris, and takes an active, almost a personal part, in the burning of six heretics, at six leading stations in the capital, all on one day. What a day's work for any one, and especially for a king?—the murder of thirty-six of his best subjects! Martyr fires blaze all along through the first half of the century. In 1553, we have an affecting story of five young men, students, chained and burnt in one fire at Lyons, that ancient seat of martyrs:—they kiss each other, and, in token of forgiveness, kiss the executioner. Their last words, heard amid the flames, are "Courage, brothers, courage."†

* The earliest martyrs to the Reformation in the 16th century seem to have been Frenchmen, as the latest Protestant sufferers in the 18th, belong to the same nation. An aged minister was destroyed so late as 1756!

† It is not necessary to record the horrors of the latter part of the reign of Francis I. All his sister's influence, to whom he was

All this could not extinguish the truth. The Holy Spirit poured down His grace, or Satan poured out his wrath; and such advances did the gospel make, that by little more than the middle of the century its friends were prepared to form themselves into a distinct organized communion. This is the Protestant Church of France—a noble communion, distinguished for eminent office-bearers, pure doctrine, government, discipline, and worship, marked with all the features of intelligent, as well as living Christianity—noted for its concern for the instruction of the ministry,—the education of the young,—the care of the poor—for union among Christians,—hatred of Popery,—and love of souls; nor was it diminutive in numbers. So abundant was the outpouring of the Spirit, so rapid His operations, that in twelve short years from the meeting of the first General Assembly, Theodore Beza, the colleague of Calvin, could count above 2150 congregations. In the province of Normandy alone, situated, not in the south, where evangelical religion had been propagated for ages, but in the north, where it had been little known, there were above 300 ministers. The one congregation of Orleans had five pastors and 7000 communicants. It would have been delightful had such an order of things been permitted to continue, but there was too much good for Satan to endure—hence simultaneously with this period, and immediately subsequent to it, there was a great conflict, and much suffering.

much attached, was vain as a check against the enmity of the human heart to the truth of God and its consistent professors. Equally so was the fine address of Calvin to the King, in the preface to his Institutes published in 1536. The persecution which raged in France in 1540, overspread even the mountains and valleys of Piedmont.

The age through which we are now passing was the age of the religious or rather civil wars of France. It is extremely difficult to keep any strong influence in a country, such as reviving and extending Protestantism free from an alliance in some form or other, with political parties. These parties seek to turn it to their own advantage, while Popish adversaries lay snares, and labour to divert it into a political channel, for the express purpose of thereby weakening its moral power. I am not prepared, nor is it necessary, to defend all the proceedings of the French reformed in connection with the nine civil wars. It may be, that, in the military spirit of their nation, they flew too quickly to arms and injuriously identified their religion with a political and worldly party; but, on the other hand, it must be confessed, that the wanton, sportive, and unutterable cruelties to which they were subjected, far beyond those of Claverhouse in this country, necessarily drove to resistance; and so far from its being true that it was the taking arms which destroyed the religious movement, facts seem clearly to shew that, but for such proceedings, they must as a body have been utterly exterminated. It was only repeated and determined resistance which extorted the concession of being allowed to breathe—a concession which was ever and anon interrupted. The reader will have a tolerable idea of the sea of troubles through which the Protestant Church of France was called to pass at this time, when informed that in the thirty to forty years which elapsed immediately after her public and proclaimed organization, there were 300 military engagements, several hundred places besieged, and one million of French subjects destroyed! Jonathan Edwards, in his *History of Redemption*, brings out the picture still more in detail. When writing of this age he

says, "It is reckoned that, within thirty years, there were martyred in France for the Protestant religion, 39 princes, 148 counts, 234 barons, 147,518 gentlemen, and 760,000 of the common people." The large number of persons, in the middle and even the highest ranks, who fell a sacrifice, shews that the evangelical faith was not the religion of the poor and ignorant only, but embraced much of the rank, wealth, and intelligence of the nation.*

One might have thought that after the civil contests were over, and experience had proved that neither war, nor treacherous truces—more bloody than war—could exterminate the hated Hugonots; there would have been permanent, though constrained peace. But, No; the very next event which meets us in the history, is the massacre of St Bartholomew in August 1572, one of the largest and deepest blood-stains in all the bloody history of Rome. Provoked, it would seem, with the growing numbers of the Reformed, in spite of all efforts to extinguish (for it was the very year before, that Beza counted above 2000 congregations), the Church of Rome resolved on a wholesale massacre, in which treachery and cruelty should strive for pre-eminence. She would fain, as by one Gunpowder plot, at one stroke cut off the flower

* It has been estimated, that, besides those who fell in the civil wars, not less than 200,000 persons suffered death in France for their religion in forty-three years (1555-1598). This is at the rate of 5000 lives a-year, or 13 lives a-day. Of what other country can such protracted and unsatiable cruelty be affirmed? Surely the religion must have been *felt* to be precious which could sustain all this.

Puffendorf, in his *Introduction to the History of Europe*, speaking of the civil wars, says:—"It is related by some, that these civil wars devoured above a million of people; that £150,000,000 were employed in paying off the soldiers; that 9 cities, 400 villages, 20,000 churches, 2000 monasteries, and 10,000 houses, were burnt or laid level with the ground."—P. 201.

of the Protestant strength; and accordingly we have it on the testimony of Roman Catholic historians themselves, that in a few months 70,000, some say 100,000, unoffending and confiding Protestants were massacred in cold blood. In Paris alone there were ten thousand victims. The river Seine was dyed with blood. Those who resided on its banks at a distance, imagined some great battle had been fought. Alas! it was only the slaying of a body of God's witnesses. Europe might well have put on mourning; but the Pope rejoiced—had a jubilee appointed, to which 100,000 pilgrims flocked—had medals struck, so much esteemed and so much in the spirit of the age as to be re-issued in 1839,—had a picture painted on the walls of the grand stair-case of the Vatican, representing the massacre, a painting which, ominous to tell, still remains fresh, open to public gaze, without shame or compunction.

Such an event as this must have been most disastrous. Indeed, nothing can explain the continued existence, not to speak of the advancement of the evangelical church, save the special and sustained interposition of her exalted Head. What church unhurt, could bear the loss of 70,000 or 100,000 of her choicest members? While such multitudes lost their lives, we may be sure many more forgot their principles and proved apostates? We meet with marked traits of degeneracy onwards to the granting of the edict of Nantes in 1598. This protective edict, the gift of Henry IV., was in some respects a proof of continued Protestant power, but there had been a serious decline both in numbers and in spirit. There are now less than a thousand congregations. The massacre has partially, at least, fulfilled the purpose of its perpetrators—an immense part of Christ's French flock are scattered and destroyed.

EVANGELICAL HISTORY FROM A.D. 1598 TO A.D. 1685. SIXTH PERIOD.

The next epoch in the history of evangelical religion in France, is from the granting to the recal of the Edict of Nantes, a period of nearly a hundred years. Subsequent to the early years of rapid and vigorous progress, this might be denominated the most prosperous period of French Protestantism. There were indeed perpetual—sometimes harassing infractions of the guaranteed protection. There were many and watchful enemies from without, and seasons of coldness and partial error within. Still the French Protestant church was a noble witness for Christ in the heart of a great Popish land, and her influence was felt. Comparatively speaking, persecution was at an end; and though an Erastian State hampered the free exercise of her government and discipline, the trumpet of doctrine blew no uncertain sound. She could point to a long list of most able and accomplished divines—was noted for her love for the word of God—her zeal in the publication and circulation of good books—her labours to promote education and ministerial learning. She was distinguished also for her protest against the errors and corruptions of the Church of Rome—her maintenance of sound doctrine in general against the corresponding errors—for her spirit of sympathy and benevolence—and for her desire after Christian union among true churches of Christ. It cannot be doubted that a vast multitude of souls were, through her instrumentality, from generation to generation, gathered unto the fold of the great and good Shepherd, and that she exerted a powerful

influence also even on the Romish Church. It is well known that France was the grand theatre of the Jansenists, the only party in the Church of Rome who professedly hold the doctrines of gratuitous salvation. It would not be easy to estimate during their sixty years of contest with the Jesuit and other Arminian parties, how much they were indebted for the sound doctrinal views which they held to the preaching, and the works of their brethren of the Protestant Church. At least we find no such struggle for the doctrines of free grace in any other Romish land. It is not improbable that it was the felt connection between the scriptural writings of the Protestants and the rise and spread of Jansenism, which led the Jesuits to exert all their influence, and successfully, alas! for the recal of the edict of Nantes.

EVANGELICAL HISTORY FROM A.D. 1685 TO A.D. 1793.

SEVENTH PERIOD.

This brings us to the next period in the history of French Protestantism, that which stretches from the repeal of the edict in 1685, to the French Revolution in 1793. The protracted space comprehended between these years might be said, both outwardly and spiritually, to be one of lamentation, and mourning, and woe. God has a very sovereign mode of dealing with churches as well as individuals. In some countries, as Italy and Spain, he allows the truth to be suppressed almost as soon as it has had the bare opportunity of shewing that the soil is one in which it can grow and flourish. In others, as in France, he allows it temporary prosperity—a large development at first—then a more contracted, but use-

ful course—to be followed by more than a century of persecution and decay—terminating almost in extinction; while in other countries, like our own, the truth in one church communion or another, is upheld in purity and power through successive centuries, and never allowed to die.

The revocation of the edict of Nantes by Louis XIV. —long meditated by enemies, and prepared for in part by the declining spirit of the Protestant Church, and the courtly spirit and tone of too many of her leading ministers, was, in every light in which it can be contemplated, a tremendous event. Blood may not have flowed in the same profusion as in the massacres of the previous century, but there was a vast sacrifice of human life, while nearly a million of the best—the most skilful and industrious subjects were driven from their native land. France has never, as a country, recovered the loss which she then sustained.* But what was more serious—evan-

* One fact out of many may be stated as an example. Tours, the capital of Touraine, was eminent for the manufacture of silk, which it largely exported. The workmen were chiefly Protestants. What was the effect of the recal of the edict? The population fell from 40,000 to 4000, and the silk-looms from 8000 to 1200. As to other things bearing a retributive aspect, I quote the language of another:—"At the commencement of the seventeenth century, Tours was indeed a city of churches, and at least twenty steeples or towers presented themselves to the eye in the outline of the view, and formed a noble perspective: at the present day the outline of the city is almost deprived of its ecclesiastical adornments; the two towers of the cathedral, two other towers in ruins, and a few small spires, are all that appear, and of the remaining churches, which suffered much during the Revolution, some are shut up, one is now used as the corn-market, another as a magazine for hay, a third is used for the stables of an hotel, and a standing-place for carriages; the interior of another is divided into compartments for workshops, and the public theatre desecrates another."

gelical religion was well nigh extinguished. Jansenism was suppressed in the Romish Church: and what had been the Protestant Church, the Church of Du Moulin, and Bochart, and Daille, and Du Bosc, and Claude, and Saurin, became little more than a shattered column, or scattered fragments. For several generations a feeble testimony was kept up on the mountains of Cevenne,* in the south, and in secluded corners in other quarters; but the Dragoonades and Galleys of Louis XIV. and his successors, were permitted to do their terrible work. Satan doubtless required. Wretched conformity, in other words, apostacy and error, devoured what persecution had spared. Not but that Christ had still a people in the dark night of rising and spreading infidelity, even as he had a people in the middle ages of popery in the times of Vigilantius and of Waldo; but they were few in number—cold in spirit—ready to expire. It is not the way of popery to persecuté a dead Protestant church. We may therefore, apart from every thing else, be sure that French Protestantism, at the epoch of the Revocation, was to a great extent a living church, and the persecution, which continued at intervals through the succeeding century, down almost to the Revolution, indicates that there were still living congregations—usually congregators of the desert.† Let us not, however, hide from our-

* It is stated by Court, in his "Histoire des Troubles des Cevennes," that, in the war of the Camisards, which lasted from 1702 to 1711, one hundred and twenty churches were burnt down, fifteen Protestant preachers were put to death, and four hundred and sixty-six places were sacked and plundered, while their inhabitants were massacred.

† The persecuting spirit, during a part of the period, may be gathered from the fact that, from 1669 to 1720, there were more than *two hundred edicts* issued against the Reformed, which D. D.

selves the painful truth, that martyrdom, imprisonment, exile, an Erastian suppression of the meeting of church courts, religious error associated with growing infidelity, the absence of the means of suitable ministerial education, and burning and burying of good books, sometimes 6000 in one fire—these, and kindred adverse influences, continued not for a few years, but for generations, wore out the spirit of evangelical principle and piety, and left little for the infidel revolution of 1793 to accomplish. It is a fearful fact, that at that dread day more than one Protestant minister came forth with the priests of Rome, and publicly abjured Christianity, offering up the sacred vessels of Christian communion on the altar of infidelity, declaring that for years they had been professing to teach what they did not believe.

It is not necessary to say anything in the history of Evangelical religion of the revolution of France, itself from first to last essentially infidel. There is only a connection between the two which should never be forgotten. The infidelity of France, in the terrible consequences of which not only Europe, but Christendom and the world suffered, was the obvious fruit of the protracted persecution and almost extinction of evangelical religion. French popery in an inquiring age, and among a people alive to the ludicrous, was left without check or restraint. Pursuing its course of ignorance, credulity, and immorality, it provoked scepticism, which was imme-

Scott, Esq., who possesses a copy, and who has turned much of his attention to the subject, states, form "a corpus injuriæ" altogether unrivalled as an exhibition of legislative wrong, papal fanaticism, and political infatuation. This is equivalent, on an average, to four edicts a-year, or one every quarter! How anxious must the Little horn have been to wear out the saints!

diately adopted, and carried forward with great talent, and combined resources. This at length terminated in the Revolution, with all its social and religious horrors. Hence the Revolution may be fairly regarded as the award of the great moral Governor of the nations for the long and merciless persecution of the saints. And what could be more just? The Romish church had robbed the Protestants for centuries, and now her property is made a spoil. She had drunk deeply of their blood, and now her own blood is shed profusely as water. Infidelity shall be the executioner of Divine vengeance, and do what evangelical religion could not have done. The very parties—the priests who had been most active oppressors, and the very places which had been most identified with oppression, such as Paris, Orleans, Meaux, Lyons, and Nantes, in the days of the revolution, were the very parties and places which were called most signally to suffer, as if to render the moral retribution more marked and indisputable.*

This striking relationship between the French persecution of the saints, and subsequent national revolution, is not the fanciful idea of an ardent or intolerant mind.

* Burnet, in his History of the Clergy during the Revolution, says:—"One hundred and thirty-eight bishops and archbishops, sixty-four thousand curates or vicars, driven from their sees, their parishes; all the clergy, all the religious of both sexes, robbed of the patrimony of the church, and forced from their retreats; the temples of the Lord converted into capacious prisons for the reception of his ministers; three hundred of his priests massacred in one day in one city; all the other pastors who remained faithful to their God, either sacrificed or banished their country, seeking through a thousand dangers a refuge among foreign nations; such is the spectacle exhibited to the world by the French Revolution." How different from the light and sportive anticipations of Voltaire! Five-and-twenty years before, the infidel foresaw the harvest for

Not only did the eminent Rev. Dr M'Crie mark it long ago, but more recent writers, such as the late Rev. Blanco White, a converted Spanish priest;* Rev. Dr Croly, in his Life of Burke;† and Mr Alison in his History of the French Revolution‡ notice the same just but terrible tie. The only marvel is (though by no means a rare one in such cases,) that many of the worst offenders, so far as a present world is concerned, were allowed to escape. Louis XVI. was the first French monarch of respectable moral character for generations, and was, besides, unstained with the guilt of Protestant persecution; yet it is upon him that the guillotine of the Revolution descends. He is made to reap the fruits of the polluted and bloody proceedings of his predecessors,‖ particularly Louis XIV. and XV.

which he had industriously sown. In April 1764, he says, "whatever I behold is sowing the seeds of a revolution which will infallibly come, but which I will not have the pleasure to witness. On the first occasion they will break out, and then there will be a fine tumult. Young people are fortunate for they will see charming things." Ah! the heartlessness—the monstrous cruelty of infidelity,—and this is the friend of freedom and of man.

* Preservative against Popery, p. 22.

† Vol. i. p. 300. ‡ Vol. x. p. 100.

‖ Men who begin their readings of French History with the Revolution of 1792, may be scarcely able to understand the event or to believe its details. Those who have studied the earlier periods, especially the morally fearful character brought out in the courts of Louis XIV. and XV., will almost wonder that the judgments of God did not earlier descend. Never did a nation, through its higher classes, more loudly call for Heaven's wrath.—*De Dangeau's Memoirs of the Court of France, and Justamond's Private Life of Louis XV.*

EVANGELICAL HISTORY FROM A.D. 1793 TO A.D. 1815.

EIGHTH PERIOD.

Little time and space are necessary to trace Evangelical religion in France through the Revolution down to the peace of Europe in 1815. The Revolution, with the vast and protracted wars to which it gave origin, and particularly its first ten years of outrageous infidelity, could not be expected to exert a propitious influence in behalf of the gospel. Externally, the condition of the Protestants was improved—they were freed from persecution on the side of popery, and civil privileges and advantages as a church were even extended to them, but they were not in circumstances to profit by the gift. There was too little religion to enable them to derive any real advantage from their new position, while the favour which they naturally cherished for the liberal or infidel party, who had been the first to befriend them, created an alliance which was not on the side of true religion. The best proof of the melancholy state to which matters were reduced among the Reformed, is to be found in the fact, that at the beginning of this century, the search of four days in the capital of France was required, ere a single copy of the word of God could be found, though it was estimated at the time there were from 30,000 to 40,000 nominal Protestants in Paris! How changed from the days of the early Reformation, when the scriptures, newly translated, were to be found in every family, and mechanics spent the intervals of their work in their perusal! In harmony with the above sad statement, it may be mentioned, that when the late R. Haldane, Esq., at the return of peace in 1815, visited the Continent, only four or five pastors literally

could be found in the Reformed Church of France (numbering at its lowest point of depression 250), who, in the judgment of charity, could be regarded as gospel preachers—nor were even the views of divine truth entertained by this small number, so clear as not to need improvement. What adds to the sadness of the picture, is the recollection that there were at this time no other Protestants save those of the Reformed Church. We are not left to hope, that among different Christian communities, when one sunk into coldness and decay, others might rejoice in spiritual sensibility. In the present case, the Protestant body was but *one*, and the gloom therefore was unbroken. It is otherwise *now*.

But let us not imagine that either during, or in the midst of the wars consequent on the Revolution, the Lord left himself without a witness. Blessed be God! the *apostolic succession* of gospel truth and ordinances does not depend even upon pastors. From the earliest days of the Reformation in France, the faithful did not scruple about the services of godly laymen, when those of more regular teachers could not be obtained. In some respects this was a marked feature in the character of the French Reformation, and betokened sincerity and earnestness. Humble, but devoted men, such as Leclerc, the martyred wool-carder, taught the truth with effect, when more prominent teachers were driven into exile. Even Farel's ordination would be considered far from regular, judged of by the standard of the present day. Following out this spirit at the period of deepest religious depression, when faith had well nigh abandoned the entire body of the pastors, there were groupes of humble Christians who sought to edify each other, and to keep alive the flame of true religion—sometimes, in the absence of the persecuted

scriptures, by repeating passages, hymns, and prayers, and thus in a traditionary form transmitting the sacred light from father to son. Interesting cases of this kind were met with even in the north of France,—shewing how varied are the modes, and how easy it is for the Lord, in all circumstances, even the most adverse, to preserve alive the knowledge of His saving truth.

EVANGELICAL HISTORY FROM A.D. 1815 TO A.D. 1845.
NINTH PERIOD.

The next and the last period in the history of French Protestantism is happily one of decided and extensive revival. It would therefore demand enlarged space, while our limits forbid more than the merest mention. Decay and death need little room: their history is soon told; they are blanks. It is otherwise with life. The revival of religion in France seems to have been contemporaneous with the peace of 1815. The religion of other countries may have been stirred by the Revolution and its wars. The Missionary and Bible Societies seem, under God, to have been a reaction from the wide-spread infidelity which threatened to swallow up every record of Christianity. But they did not operate favourably upon France; at least we have no visible proof of sanctified affliction. At the same time, we are not entitled to infer from the miserably small number of faithful pastors, that there was no preparatory process going forward among the people at large. Dr Merle D'Aubigné, in his "Discourse on the History of Christianity," has well remarked, "Man does not pass in vain through such seasons of change. Under the ruins, he was stamped with

a new character. Baptized with blood, the present generation could no longer live in the same frivolous atmosphere of thought with the last. The profane La Harpe, in some respects the successor of Voltaire as president of the Anti-Christian League, entered the dungeons of the Revolution an unbeliever, and left them a Christian."

Whatever might be the secret operation of the Spirit with the dispensations of Divine Providence in preparing the way, the first visible agency for good was the opening up of the Continent to the visits and labours of British Christians by the peace. The most conspicuously useful of these Christian travellers was the late Robert Haldane, Esq. of Edinburgh. With that sagacity for which he was distinguished, he turned his labours towards the young men intended for the ministry. At first he had only six to hear his expositions of scripture; but they were looking forward to a sphere of duty which rendered an evangelical change wrought on them of far greater value than the same change on six private Christians. It affords a beautiful illustration of the power of the simple word of God in the hands of the Spirit, that though at first Mr Haldane was able very imperfectly to communicate with his youthful friends, from unacquaintance with their language, and they with his, yet the Spirit abundantly blessed the effort to make known the gospel; and, all unfavourable as were the external circumstances, carried through a spiritual change which is missed by multitudes surrounded with every facility and advantage. Mr Haldane's prayers and labours were largely honoured by the Spirit: a revival of evangelical religion was awoke and spread through the young men who waited on his expositions; and the fruits of it remain to this day. Several of the leading and most de-

voted pastors on the Continent acknowledge Mr Haldane as their spiritual father; and some, after a course of great usefulness, have been called to the reward of the faithful servant.

In the prevailing destitution of the scriptures, Mr Haldane saw that an important instrument of immediate and extensive good would be the formation of a Bible Society at Montauban. Though, about 1810, some 4000 copies of the French New Testament had been sent to France from this country, yet this was a most inadequate supply to a land where the most active means had long been employed to exterminate the word of God. Accordingly, the destitution was fearful, and there were great difficulties in supplying it. While the cost of a Bible was not less than sixty francs, or fifty shillings of our money, it could only be procured by writing to Geneva, and then there were delays and custom-house charges, which discouraged applicants. Mr Haldane, with a generosity little known in these days, put down his name for L.1000 to print and circulate Bibles in France itself. Since then, blessed be the God of the Bible! there has been a large circulation of the scriptures in French; and it cannot be doubted this has contributed much to the happy revival which has deepened and enlarged since the days of Mr Haldane. Indeed, some of the most interesting facts in modern times of the power of the simple word of God, as read by one's self or read by others, without human comment, may be gathered from the present religious history of France, particularly in connection with the labours of Colportage. Not a few instances could be quoted of men in most disadvantageous circumstances coming to the knowledge of the truth by the mere peru-

sal of the scriptures; yea, of Roman Catholics finding out that they were Protestants without being aware of the change. More than this, examples on a large scale could be appealed to of entire families and parishes being led to abandon the Church of Rome, and embrace the Evangelical faith, who had never seen the face of a minister or a missionary. This shews how speedily an immense work of good may appear in France. In these times, too, when so many are anxious to magnify the priest and the sacraments over Christ and the word, God the Spirit, whose work the word is—whose office it is to testify of Christ—seems resolved to lift up a testimony on the other side, and proclaim, in a way not to be misunderstood, the sufficiency of scripture and of the Saviour whom it reveals.

Every Christian heart which is able to appreciate the force of these remarks will rejoice to learn, that, as nearly as can be ascertained, the present annual circulation of Bibles and New Testaments by different societies in France is little short of 200,000 copies, almost all of which are sold—not given away gratuitously—and that they are yearly on the increase. Nor will a lover of the scriptures fail to rejoice when informed, without entering into details, that since 1815 there has been a circulation of not less than 2,672,514 copies of the Bible, in whole or in part, in the kingdom of France.* What a blessed contrast to the commencement of the century, when deputies from the London Missionary Society searched for four days in the book-shops of the capital ere they could find a single Bible! No wonder that, under the ordinary influences of the Holy Spirit, there is a growing revival. They who honour His word

* Foreign Evangelical Society, New York, 1842, Report of.

He will honour. And the wonder is still less, when we consider that one of the leading Bible societies the other year employed 100 Colporteurs, of whom not less than eighty were converted Roman Catholics (with one exception, all of them Frenchmen), for the sale of the scriptures,—men many of whom can say, and do say, to the infidel or the bigot, who would reject the volume which they proffer, "Read the word of God for yourself. I once rejected it as well as you, and sought for happiness in human saviours; but now I have found the pearl of great price, and would have you to rejoice in the same gift. Receive and read the word of life." * In all, there are now 300 colporteurs at work in France.

Besides the wide diffusion of the scriptures, at once the indication and the instrument of religious revival, there are many others which I can only name. There has been a considerable enlargement of the Protestant body. Mons. de la Farelle, a member of the Chamber of Deputies, lately stated that, including the Lutherans, the whole Protestant pastors in 1815 amounted to 464; they now exceed 700. Their churches are proportionally increased, and yet there are still 111 places in

* It is not a new thing for France to deal largely in the circulation of Bibles and tracts. Her Protestants were driven to this course from the Reformation. So early as 1524, the leading reformers had printing-presses incessantly at work at Basel; and through Colporteurs poured the word of God and appropriate books into France. One of the earliest was a translation of Luther's exposition of the Lord's Prayer. There was no other way, amid the prevailing hostility, of spreading the truth. Like their successors in our day, early Colporteurs had much to suffer. Not unfrequently the prison was the punishment of the sale of a copy of the scriptures. How interesting to mark the identity of means for good employed by faithful men in all ages!

which the French Protestants are obliged, from the absence of accommodation, to worship in the open air. What is far better, there is an increase of evangelical doctrine and spirit. At Montauban, where once nothing but Socinianism was known, several of the leading professors are not only evangelical, but eminently able and accomplished advocates of gospel truth. At the Evangelical Seminary of Geneva, which supplies many pastors to France, all the theological professors, five in number, are men of God, several of them men of high talent and fame. It is not to be wondered at, that, under the grace of the Spirit, there should be growing evangelism among the pastors. Accordingly, I have been informed, on good authority, that the faithful ministry in France may be rated at 300. What a change from the period not very distant, when four or five were all that charity could reckon among the preachers of the truth. Indeed, it is stated that mere orthodoxy is on the ascendancy; spiritual life is not always synonymous with it, and cannot be rated so highly; but what ground of thanksgiving that its progress has been so decided, and that there are no symptoms of interruption or weakness.

Besides these happy proofs of progress, it is interesting to remember, that in addition to the National Reformed Church of which I have been speaking, there are *now* various Evangelical bodies in operation in France, such as the Wesleyan Methodists and Congregationalists, bodies which count a considerable number of adherents, and all whose influence, whether through churches or schools, is exerted undividedly on the side of evangelical religion. Nor must the Evangelical societies, whether labouring at home or abroad, be overlooked. They have

been from ten to twenty years in operation, and the fact of their existence indicates growth. Religion must have made some progress before even Christians have spirit and courage enough to embark in such undertakings. Besides the Bible societies, to which reference has been already made, there are in France various important associations, such as the Society for Promoting the General Interests of Protestantism—the Evangelical Society of France—the Society for Encouraging Primary Instruction or Education—the Evangelical Society of Bourdeaux—same of Lyons—the Religious Tract Society—the Toulouse Society of Religious Books—the Society of Foreign Evangelical Missions, and various others of more limited and local design.

I can only notice the Evangelical Society of France. Its labours are devoted to France exclusively. It employs above ninety agents, in one form or another, ministers, missionaries, teachers, students for the ministry, &c.; and yet such is the advantage to which money may be applied on the Continent, that the whole cost scarcely exceeds L.4000 a year. Its progress has been very striking. When it started, eleven years ago, it could command little more than L.300. It is aided in its labours by the Evangelical Society of Geneva, which devotes a large share of its attention to France. Above fifty of the agents are employed on the French territory. It were vain to attempt to give any detailed description of the religious operations of the society, or of the spiritual fruit. Suffice it to say, that never were its labours more abundant or more blessed; never were as many minds brought into contact with divine truth; never was there a greater thirst for the word of life; never were there such earnest calls for preachers of the gospel and

teachers for children as at the present moment. It is doubtful whether France, religiously considered, has ever been more open to the truth, and more promising, since the days of its glorious Reformation. Such is the uniform testimony of the most intelligent friends of evangelical religion in France. Nor is this all. After guarding against exaggeration, and carefully sifting the evidence, so far as man can judge in such cases, there seems no reason to doubt, not only that many individuals have been savingly changed, some of them afterwards becoming agents of the Societies; but there are entire communes or parishes which have broken off from the Church of Rome, and which are groping their way to the faith and obedience of the gospel.* Affecting cases of conversion to God are from time to time detailed with all the signs of sincerity, while men of high name and character, who are not likely to be imposed on or misled, assure us that the people of fifty to sixty parishes have either publicly revolted or are about to revolt from Rome. Why should we be incredulous of such tidings? Is limited success in the past to be the perpetual rule of the future? Is the Spirit not all gracious and powerful, as in the days of old? And is He at any season more likely to interpose with his mercy than

* From a letter received the other day from Haute Vienne, the scene of the most general movement, it appears not only that in various quarters the people are very accessible to religious instruction (there having been not more than three or four priests to twenty-five parishes since the Revolution of 1792), but there is a great thirst to hear the word of God. One proof of this is to be found in the fact, that a humble husbandman had been able to collect a congregation of from 400 to 500 Roman Catholics, with no higher attraction than the proclamation of the simple word of truth.

just after there has been an ample and believing sowing of his word? Are the expectations which prophecy holds out never to be realized?

It cannot be doubted that a great work is going forward in France; and if one had any suspicion of the soundness or strength of the Evangelical spirit, to which it is, under God, attributable, it would be dissipated by the information that the same evangelism which labours so zealously at home is not narrow and contracted in soul; but, like the spirit of truth, reaches to foreign shores, and seeks to gather in the perishing heathen to the ark of safety. The Evangelical Protestants of France have a foreign mission to the Eastern coast of Africa, and support it with a liberality little inferior to that with which they sustain the Evangelical society, which labours in their own home provinces. When, comparatively speaking, so small a body—so poor in outward resources—so recently recovered from deadness and error—devote themselves to such works of faith, and love, and courage, as their African mission implies, it is not an unreasonable inference that the principle which is at the root of the whole is vigorous, and is likely, with God's help, to achieve spiritual results at home. At least, it indicates a correct appreciation of the nature and claims of the gospel as a diffusive dispensation; and it is a great law of God's government, that if we would be watered, we must water. It need scarcely be added, as a general proof of the progress of evangelical principle in France, that the contributions to all religious objects have greatly increased of late years. In 1828, the whole sum did not exceed L.2000. In 1838, or in ten years, it had risen to between L.14,000 and L.15,000; and last year, six societies alone—a small number of the whole—had

reached that sum. This year the religious societies reported L.20,000.

Having thus given a hurried and very imperfect sketch of evangelical religion in France in former and in present times, I conclude by pointing out a few great practical lessons to be drawn from the whole. The theme would have required a volume rather than a single lecture; but it is well to have thoughts suggested even where there is not space to follow them out into exposition or detail.

1. We are taught the power, faithfulness, and love of the great Head of the Church to his people. He has given many promises to them in his word, and the history of the truth in France supplies proofs of the fulfilment of them all. No where have enemies raged for a longer time, or more fiercely or in more varied forms, against living Christianity than in France. It has been eminently the country of martyrs. There is nothing in apostolic or primitive times which in point of cruelty can surpass what has been transacted in the French territory. The sufferings of Britain and Belgium, in connection with the Reformation, and subsequently even the multiplied and long-continued woes of the Waldenses proper—of the church of Piedmont,—cannot be compared in number, extent, and awfulness, with the massacres of the French Protestants. Their country has been a very Aceldama, a field of religious blood. However it may be explained, the French throughout their history have shewn a peculiar appetite for blood—an utter disregard of human life. Oftentimes would one have imagined the professors of the truth must surely *now* be exterminated. Who can stand before such long-continued cunning and

grinding cruelty? But the promise is faithful. Christ has never been without a people in France. His power has been exerted in preserving—his wisdom in delivering—his love in cheering and consoling, in the darkest and most hopeless hour. The bush has burnt long and fiercely, but He has not suffered it to be consumed. Had it been left to the mercy of man, or even the resources of the faithful themselves, such must have been its fate long ago. Mark then the fidelity of Christ to his promises—his all-sufficiency to his people. And consider whether He who has manifested his might and his grace in the past is likely to forsake them in the present or the future,—whether He who has proved a steady friend to France at the worst, is likely to fail when comparative peace returns; yea, whether we have not a pledge of his power should the future, instead of being arrayed in sunshine, be shrouded in a more terrible tempest than has yet burst upon that devoted land. I need not add, that what Christ is to his people in France, he is—he must be—to them every where. I would only suggest, that surely a country which has been so signalized by Christ's faithfulness has peculiar claims upon our Christian regards,—that in all likelihood the Saviour has much yet to do with it and for it. Meanwhile, surely we may learn lessons of wisdom, fidelity, and fortitude, from the experience of the French martyrs whom He sustained. It is no small thing to be animated and encouraged by their example for what is before us.

2. We are reminded of the righteous moral government of Christ the mediator. If the history of religion in France awakens pleasing thoughts of Christ's faithfulness, power, and love, it not less truly awakens solemn recollections of just retribution. If France has

been pre-eminent for religious bloodshed, she has also been pre-eminent for social disorder, suffering, and woe. Nay, it has been generally possible to trace a connection between the one and the other. What France endured as a nation for twenty years, at the close of the last and the beginning of the present century, is indescribable. No wonder that many commentators on prophetic scripture have found France prominent in the book of Revelation, and have applied five of the vials of wrath to her revolutionary woes. It is only the pen of inspiration which can tell the horrors, and it does so in a few terrible verses. The simple fact that between eight and nine millions of human lives were lost in the heart of the most civilized part of Europe in the beginning of the 19th century, in the course of twenty years, all directly or indirectly the fruit of the infidel revolution of France, speaks volumes as to the magnitude and awfulness of the retribution. Compared with this the loss of property, the oppression of permanent debt to the nations of Europe, though vast, is as nothing. Numbers equal to the population of entire countries cut down in a few years in the flower of manhood! Ah! sure there was here some moral recompense for the slaughter of the Albigenses, and the massacre of St Bartholomew, and the recall of the edict of Nantes. Every enlightened conscience must have felt the connective Reasoning on the same great moral principle; who can tell what yet may await France? It is no want of charity to say that much Protestant blood has yet to be answered for. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." He will not allow the blood of so much as one of them to remain unvindicated, and how solemn, then, are the prospects of this bloodstained and withal impenitent land!

Interpreters of prophecy, when compelled to look for the scene and the instrument of something vast and awful in the future fulfilment of the apocalypse, naturally took to France; and certainly, her growing power—the unsubdued and warlike temper of her people—her subjection to Popery, or rather her eager adoption of its persecuting spirit, and her anxiety to signalize herself in missionary zeal, do not discountenance the intimations of scripture. But whatever may be the events of the future, enough has appeared in the past to assure us that "verily there is a judge in *the earth*,"—that Christ renders his providential and moral rule subservient to the defence and propagation of his kingdom—and that, let hand join in hand, the wicked shall not even here pass unpunished. How impressively does the history of France proclaim all this! Let us rejoice that there is a moral government in the earth—that sin and aggravated sin is not allowed to run on unrestrained. Let us not think it uncharitable to mark the retribution. Let us remember that God has recorded the rule and illustrative example in his word, for the express purpose of regulating our judgment in the cases of moral administration which are happening around us from day to day. Let us trace, then, the Mediator's moral rule through the history of France. Severe as may be some of its aspects, let us acknowledge its rectitude—let us be well awake that there is no other key to history as a whole—and never forget that the same principle of divine government, all unseen as sometimes it may be, reaches to Britain and every country under heaven, as well as to France. Let us remember that it is the sins of Christians as well as of the ungodly,—their unfaithfulness and degeneracy, as well as popish or infidel persecution of saints, which provoke the displeasure of the Righteous One, and let us stand in awe and sin not.

3. We are taught the great duties which, as British Christians, we owe to France. The lessons of the history which we have been contemplating, speak of our fellow-men and fellow-Christians, as well as of the Church's Head; and what, then, are these duties? It is to aid them in their evangelical labours by all the means within our reach—by prayer and contribution, the expression of sympathy, personal effort and protection—and why should we do so? Not only from the general claims of Christianity, from love to souls and love to fellow-believers—in which respect the French stand on the same footing with others; but from the PECULIARITIES OF THEIR POSITION AND PROSPECTS. In the providence of God, by his blessing on science and art, France is brought to our very doors. It is far more accessible than many districts of our own land. Soon the French capital will be within a few hours' travel of the British—an immense and growing intercourse is rising up between the two countries—many thousands of British permanently sojourn in France, and many more sojourn there for a season. France, from her position in Europe and the national character of her people, and their numbers and resources, is very powerful. In former lectures your attention was directed, and justly, to such limited countries as Belgium and Switzerland and Piedmont, all combined probably not exceeding, in point of population, six millions of inhabitants. What a contrast to France, with between thirty and forty millions, independent of her foreign possessions! Her natural power is greatly increased by her language being the language of the courts and higher classes of Europe, by her reputation for manners and fashion, her advancement in art and science, in short, her general civilization. Then the spread of education on a great national scale, and, above all, the rapid

rise and astounding progress of Popery within her borders, and her being now constituted the very centre of Popish unity and source of Popish power for the world, invest her nation with an influence and importance which can scarcely be exaggerated.

At the risk of repeating thoughts and facts, with which I rejoice to think not a few are becoming familiar, I must advert to this last particular feature in connection with France for a few moments. However difficult, if not impossible, to explain it on any known principle, it is unquestionable that Popery, of late years and at present, is making great and successful efforts after advancement throughout the world.* Evangelical Christians are everywhere taken by surprise, and men wonder at the change which has come over the spirit of the age, without being able to trace out the cause. It is not in one country alone there is movement, with few exceptions the advance is universal. There are Foreign missions as well as Home operations. There are 140 Popish bishoprics, 5000 missionary priests. A million sterling of annual missionary expenditure. More than double what is raised by all the Protestant missionary societies of the world. Of course Rome does not trouble herself with Bible Societies. In the De Propaganda College at Rome,

* The strong proselytising spirit of Popery at present may seem somewhat strange. Diffusion is rather the character of true, than of false religion. Bhuddism and Muhammadanism make no attempts to proselytize. Perhaps the peculiarities of Popery do not admit of explanation without bearing in remembrance that "the coming of the Man of Sin is *after the working of Satan*." It is certain that the prophecy respecting Antichrist in his last days, would lead us to anticipate great efforts after converts. The evil spirits are to go forth and gather together all the kings of the earth to the battle of Armageddon.

forty-eight languages are taught, while the immense Jesuit army, now every where, not only tolerated, but revived and strengthened, if not welcomed, waits the orders of the Pope.* Every station of importance abroad, seems to be chosen with far-seeing wisdom as a Popish centre. Every plan resorted to which is fitted to draw forth the sympathies and secure the obedience of different classes of the population. No sooner are there new openings to European enterprize, as recently in China, but Romish priests, in bands of forty, are ready to seize the opportunity. No country is too distant or inconsiderable to escape their eagle eye—no device too low to be beneath their subtility and cunning. The churches of the East, long independent—they are straining every nerve to bring into subjection.† Asia is made as patent to their travels as

* It is remarkable that though France has always boasted of her freedom as compared with other Roman Catholic countries, it was within her borders that the Jesuits had their great victory over the Jansenists; and that she was the last, save Spain and Rome, to suppress that terrible order. Venice itself suppressed them in 1606, but it was not till 1764, that France followed this course, only nine years before Rome was compelled to take the same step. These facts, taken in connection with the present unexampled rise in the Jesuitism of France, seem to indicate that there is nothing in the French character or liberties inconsistent with the spirit and power of Antichrist in their worst forms—rather that there is congeniality between them—a serious prospect for this as well as other countries. The increased number of Jesuits in France is most remarkable. *The Universe*, Roman Catholic Newspaper, states that this year there are a thousand more than last year.

† Hence the efforts of late years, with the increased facilities of communication with the East, to plant missions in Egypt, Syria, Persia, Khoordistan, and even Abyssinia. French Jesuits have a rising college at Beyroot in Syria, and the *French government* have recently purchased ground for the operations of male and female religious orders at Alexandria. In 1838, the Jesuits began their

Europe, while they lay the foundation of an immense empire in republican America.* The whole movement is the more remarkable that, politically, in point of national resources and political power,—not a few Popish countries are on the wane. It seems as if it were the spiritual part of Popery, and the delusions of the *False prophet* which were destined to triumph amid the external weakness of *the Beast*.

But it is not of the progress of Popery in general that we must speak: however strange and solemn, it is of POPERY IN CONNECTION WITH FRANCE. Do any imagine it is a matter of no moment where the apostacy advances, if it advances at all? History as well as reason point to another conclusion. While Popery is a curse wherever it exists, there are particular national relations which render this insidious system doubly injurious. What could Spain, or Portugal, or Italy at present do

efforts to seduce the Nestorian Christians from their ancient faith and independence. The dreadful Muhammadan massacre in 1843, was the result of their interference. Now that these primitive witnesses, through the kind intervention of a British ambassador, Sir Stratford Canning, are again gathering together under legal protection, the French Jesuits are at their former work. So daring have been their proceedings, and withal so illegal, that at the instance of Russia, they have been seized the other day and sent out of the country.

* Let not our American friends trust, as some of them are alleged to do, to the fact that the territory of the United States forms no part of the old Roman earth. Their country may not be overtaken with the *same* judgments as the European kingdom of the Beast, still their calamities in connection with Antichrist may be terrible indeed. They have a large and growing Popish population within their borders, and it is worthy of note, that the three unclean spirits, like frogs, go forth to the kings of "*the whole world*," as well as of "the earth," to assemble them to the battle of Armageddon.

for Popery compared with France? Nothing. They have no army or navy—no spirit or energy—no influence. The Church of Rome rather helps them than they the Church. Very different are the circumstances of France. The sagacious men of the Papacy see this, and hence their chief care is directed to that country. They are anxious *there* to raise up a popish spirit and force, which through a thousand channels may influence Europe, and through Europe may influence Asia, and Africa, and America; and they are wise in their generation. Their success in France is already prodigious—almost incredible, shewing the wisdom of their measures. A country which seemed to be hopelessly given over to infidelity—where Popery had been more humbled than in any other—the Pope for years a poor prisoner within its borders—suddenly resuscitates, and stands forth from head to foot the very champion of the Church of Rome. The change which a few years have brought round in the popular estimate and treatment of the priesthood—in the attendance on Popish worship—in the prevailing influence at work upon education—in the votes of municipal corporations—in short, on every thing which may be supposed to furnish a standard of comparison, is admitted by the most intelligent men to be as unexpected as it is formidable.*

* The Rev. M. Marzials of Lille, when recently on a visit to this country, stated some facts illustrative of the spread of French Popery, which are altogether astounding, such as it is believed few were prepared for. They are so important as to merit record. Poor Spain and Portugal contribute funds for the spread of Popery in France! Last year the former sent a sum of £10,000 for the purpose, a plain proof of the importance which is attached to France as a centre. In 1834, Mr M. heard a leading preacher of the Romish Church preach in Notre Dame in Paris. The congre-

And the energy of French Popery is not exhausted at home. It has its missionary societies. Lyons, the city of ancient and modern martyrs, is the head-quarters of a new De Propaganda, which the other year sent forth 130 missionaries to the four winds of heaven. Sisters of charity and Jesuits of every name (and doubtless often without a name) lend their eager assistance. All the arts and appliances of the past, with unbounded self-denial and zeal, are called into play. The only thing, it has been justly remarked, which is wanted to complete

gation did not exceed 200, and there were very few of the male sex in the number. He heard the same preacher in the same place, last year on a week day; the audience could not be under 5000, and men greatly predominated. Such is the change of the last ten years.

The Freres Ignorantain, an order of Jesuits devoted to education, could boast in 1834 of the countenance only of 283 towns; now their empire is all but universal. They are at the head of the national education, and their efforts in every way are as vast as they are wide spread.

In 1830 there were only between 200 and 300 of the municipal corporations of France which were under Popish influence. Last year, 36,000 out of 40,000 were on the side of the apostacy.

Paris is becoming every day more Popish, and it is well known (apart from every thing else) that this is a source of great Popish advancement. In France, the capital rules the provinces.

Similar are the tidings in regard to Belgium. An intelligent friend resident in Brussels enumerates, among the indications of Popish progress in that country, the number of new convents and churches—the publication of works on literature, science, art,—first expurgated to the taste of the Church of Rome, and then sold so cheap by societies which contribute money for the purpose, that no private publisher or bookseller is able to compete with them.

And lastly, the gradual but sure absorption of the children attending private into public schools, under the power of the Jesuits; the bribe being a gratuitous education. A college in Brussels maintained by the voluntary contributions of all parties, has the greatest difficulty in sustaining itself.

the Papal restoration, is the establishment of religious orders *and the warriors of the Middle Ages;* and already General Duvivier, one of the officers of the African army, is exclaiming, "If we had the strong burning faith of the Godfreys and the Bayards, we should form military and religious orders, who would be the heads of columns and the military conductors of our invasion. If we had bold, vigorous, sober, believing men like the companions of Ferdinand Cortes, they would rush on to conquest and civilization in the footsteps of these religious orders. If we had Christian charity, rich societies would be formed, which would raise the funds necessary to transport new crusaders. Then one may be assured they would succeed. Certainly they would impose their faith *pitilessly* on the natives; but this would be one cause more of rapid success; for, notwithstanding the progress of ideas, we must not deceive ourselves. A nation which would be powerful must have a severe discipline; and its first rule must be, not to admit of diversity of faith." * Here there is a call for the revival of the horrible crusades of South American history! Let it not be thought that these are the mere idle aspirations of a vain-glorious soldier. There are multitudes of such soldiers in France. In nothing would Popery more rejoice than if she were able to divert the strong naval spirit of the French into a religious channel. The affecting case of Tahiti strikingly shews how the military and religious fanaticism may be made to blend. No one can tell how soon, with the present and prospective temper of France, there may not be other scenes of treachery and persecution, to which those of the

* L'Esperance, Dec. 1842.

South Seas may prove to have been but a faint prelude.*

Such are the peculiarities of the present position and prospects of France. Surely they furnish the strongest argument for diligence, zeal, liberality, and perseverance on the part of British Christians in behalf of the evangelization of that great country. Had rising Popery not such a hold of France, or had it not been so active in directing all the resources of the kingdom to its own advancement, some might ask what was the use of the protracted historical detail in which I have been indulging? They might have looked upon the whole as matter of curiosity or antiquarianism, and regarded Popery as an obsolete thing; but when we find the same Popery, which perpetrated such atrocities from age to age, is not dead nor even asleep—is living, rising, swelling in power all around us, and that France is the chosen theatre of its manifestation, not only is there nothing irrelevant in the history which I have been relating, but the events of the past furnish Christians with the best means of understanding the true character of the foe with whom they are called to contend in these latter days. Let us then, by every consideration of reason, wisdom, humanity,—in short, of Christianity, which embraces the whole and many more,—arouse ourselves, and seek to arouse others, to some worthy effort for the evangelization of France. Let us think of the past—of France's eventful history—of what Christ has already done for that land. Let us remember that it is the seat of an ancient and honoured church,—that the testimony which we are called to lift up on its territory is no novel

* See the striking pamphlet "Tahiti," by Mark Wilks of Paris.

upstart fancy—that it is an old testimony, the same testimony which was lifted up by Calvin, and Farel, and Viret, and Colligny, and thousands of the great and the good,—that in labouring against French Popery and in behalf of French evangelism, we are not only helping others but helping ourselves,—not only keeping up an old and uninterrupted testimony, but defending our own borders against present enemies; above all, that we fight against the foe of a common Master under a common standard. Let us remember, that as France has been the scene of wonders in the past, and is the source of deep interest at present, so that, in all probability, it is destined to be the scene of anxious and interesting events in the future. Let us not, then, hesitate. On the contrary, let us be well assured that, under God, with the evangelization of France, many evils will be overcome,—it may be, worse mischiefs prevented; better still, that blessings will be secured for France—for Christendom—for the world—of inestimable value. If, in the days which are past, she has been so formidable as the partizan of popery or infidelity,—if she has been the dread and the scourge of Europe, sometimes, single-handed, defying its combined armies,—if even now her influence for the diffusion of a frivolous and corrupting literature, and hazardous principles of revolutionary liberty, be so vast, who can calculate the magnitude of the good were all the energy and vivacity of the French character, and all the resources of the French kingdom, hallowed by the Spirit of the gospel of Jesus? Humanly speaking, the combination of the Christian resources of Britain and France would be like the union of their flags, more than a match for the rest of the world.

The object is noble, and deserving of a great effort. It

is not merely to redeem the past—to raise up a generation stamped with the impress of martyred sires—it is to bless the present. On whichever side France is ranged in the fast-coming contest between Christ and Antichrist, the force will be a formidable one. Plainly, she is not designed to fill a secondary place. Let us, then, seek to win all her influence to the side of truth, and of righteousness, and of salvation. If her former history has been deeply stained with the blood of God's saints, let that be but a reason with us why her garments should be stained with it no more. If she has long carried the blended ensign of scepticism and superstition, let that just be the stronger reason why she should *now* be the bearer of the cross. Nor is it presumptuous to be cherishing such hopes. We know not *yet* how the parties will be ranged in the final struggle. We have every reason from prophecy to conclude, that as events approach the crisis, and during the very outpouring of the vials of woe, there will be revivals of religion—it may be, extensive; and who shall say that long-oppressed and suffering France shall not share in the blessing,—that the prayers of innumerable martyrs of noblest faith shall not be heard in her behalf? How delightful if the rivalry between her and our own land should henceforth be a rivalry, not in commerce or in arms, but in faith, and love, and good works,—in the gifts and graces of the Spirit. How delightful if France, which, half a century ago, was the great humbler of the temporal power of Popery, should, with the gospel in her hand and in her heart, one day become the grand destroyer of her spiritual ascendancy. How delightful if the triumphs of her political revolution should prove the emblem of a far more glorious change,—not a revolution of profligacy

and blood, destined to be quickly supplanted by a new despotism,—but a moral and spiritual revolution—the breaker of every yoke—the emancipator of nations—the herald to herself and to others of blessings destined never to pass away. How delightful if France, instead of going forth on the red horse of war "to take peace from the earth," should be found in the great armies which are seen in heaven upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, following Him who is called Faithful and True, and who hath upon his vesture and his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. Surely the mere possibility of such a result, and of bearing a part in bringing it about, should animate the faith, and hope, and zeal—the liberalities and prayers of British, above all of Scottish Christians—and lead them to rejoice in every effort for the evangelization of so interesting and so powerful a land.